

The Grail



BURLAND

The Grail

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THE GRAIL

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BETWEEN THE LINES

H. C. McGinnis

A WORLD PEACE ESSENTIAL

LAST MONTH we made a very general grouping of the political structures proposed for postwar society. Each group has its strong proponents. Probably the proper choice lies between the two extremes composed of those who want to see a United States of the World and those who want to see merely a commission established to recommend better relations among nations. Right now, there seem to be strong indications that most people want to see some form of world council, backed up by a world court to render international justice and an international police force strong enough to see that maniacs like Hitler, Mussolini, and the Jap imperialists never again throw the world into chaos.

Perhaps this type of organization will best suit present capacity for international cooperation. For it must be admitted that the majority of nations are still highly nationalistic from sheer habit. With many people, isolationism and patriotism are synonymous, they failing to see that their country's greatest progress and safety lies in a close and friendly collaboration with all other nations. Since this nationalistic spirit is so widespread, despite the hundreds of years of misery it has caused as nations blindly seek to destroy one another over trivial matters concerning national pride, proper world brotherhood must be grown into. It cannot be imposed by the decree of a few leaders, for true brotherhood must emanate from the souls of the world's millions. The present generation must pioneer in this field, seeking by the trial and error method to establish workable conditions for peace which future generations may improve. World peace will not descend upon us with

the suddenness of a tropical night. Peace on earth will come only when the earth's peoples have been converted to men of good will.

Let us not delude ourselves into thinking that a mere political or economic formula will bring about that worldwide happiness we seek. The solution lies not in the councils of the mighty, but in the hearts and souls of individual men and women. Therefore, any postwar world organization must be constructed so as to incite and permit the growth of true brotherhood among all peoples, regardless of race, color or creed. Any other type will be but the womb of future wars increasingly dreadful and devastating.

IT IS not our present purpose to discuss any particular type of postwar political organization. Almost any set-up will work if it and its purposes are dominated by justice and morality. But whatever is done, must be done in accordance with President Wilson's ideal of "open covenants openly arrived at." Secret treaties and back-door diplomacy must go if harmony is to prevail. Since the world's masses, and not a few ambitious politicians, have the greater and more lasting stake, the proceedings surrounding the establishment of any organization must be made public as they occur. If worldwide democratic justice is its aim, as is now proclaimed, then true democratic procedure demands that the peoples of the various nations involved be permitted to know what their representatives are doing. Only in this way can the interested publics act as a democratic check upon those who represent them and prevent them from innocently or purposely thwarting public will.

Since the United Nations leaders, for the most part, constantly label

the present struggle as a phase of a "people's revolution," both we and they must keep in mind at all times that, in such a revolution, the people's will must always be uppermost. In a people's revolution, when the masses are fully aroused to existing injustices, it is the people who demand that conditions and customs be changed so that justice can prevail. When the masses once take the bit into their own teeth, it is nothing but the sheerest foolhardiness for politicians to try to bulldoze or cozen them into ways they do not want to follow. History proves this most conclusively; but politicians, often originally well enough intentioned, are prone to become so blinded by their power, vanity and personal ambitions that they lose the proper perspective of their relationship to the situation at hand. The political and economic intrigues which guided World War I's post-war negotiations gave the publics of all the nations involved a royal bamboozling, especially since they exposed them to the present holocaust. The American public took these political drubbings patiently, but the past quarter century's history shows that many other nations did not. Today we are suffering the horrible consequences of not having open covenants openly arrived at, for secrecy is a chief weapon of materialism and all its evils. When men discuss and adjust problems according to the principles of Christian decency and morality, there is no need for secrecy. It is not and never will be a peculiarity of justice that it must work behind closed doors.

Should the arrangements for the establishment of a postwar organization be made secretly, they will scarcely receive that public support so necessary. The public, suspicious

and feeling left out in the cold, may be openly hostile. Such hostility would give the forces of evil, which will still exist, their looked-for opportunity to spread their poisonous wiles among governments and their peoples. Secret negotiations, for example, could easily lead people to suspect that Red Russia had been given the go-ahead in its ambitions to incorporate the Baltic republics, parts of Poland and Roumania, and other prizes which it now eyes so greedily. They may cause a suspicion that Britain's Tory government had succeeded in putting across to its allies—in exchange for concessions, of course—the idea that the Atlantic Charter's announced right of self-determination is the right of subject peoples who happily are not owned by an imperialistic power. They may cause Americans to wonder just what were the purposes of the war in which they made such tremendous sacrifices. They would undoubtedly cause the collapse of those plans for a democratic world for which all justice-minded people long so earnestly.

YET MANY current trends do not augur well for the establishment of open covenants openly arrived at. At this writing, over a dozen writers—experienced people who gave up their careers to aid the government in the war—have resigned from the OWI in a group. After patiently trying to change the complexion of things, they finally quit in disgust, refusing to write utter ballyhoo instead of the news to which the American public is entitled as long as it remains a democracy. Since the daily press has given this matter much discussion, the details need no repeating, yet it must be remembered that these people resigned reluctantly. People who voluntarily make heavy sacrifices to aid their embattled country do not get miffed easily. On the contrary, they are long-suffering, usually willing to surrender everything except honor and decency.

The above OWI-employed newsmen are not the only ones who are considerably alarmed about recent trends concerning the freedom of the press. The trial balloon recently

sent up concerning the concentration of all government news under the OWI is most disconcerting. This proposal suggested that news-reporting agencies be denied all access to government departments, bureaus and agencies. News-men wanting information of vital public interest about the happenings in any government department would be forced to look to the OWI. Since the OWI is frankly interested in propaganda, it could be expected to flavor, curtail or suppress information due the public as might please it or its superiors. Since serious charges have recently been made in Congress by responsible parties that part of the OWI's time and money has been used for partisan political purposes, the proposed procedure could easily become a dangerous weapon against true democracy.

Still more downright appalling is the recent White House edict denying to the nation's press access to the international food conference which will be held in Hot Springs, Virginia, before this is printed. Finally, as a concession to voluminous protests, the matter now stands decided that reporters may attend the opening and closing days. A little imagination shows how this will work out. The opening day will be filled with preliminaries. On the last day, the important decisions will have been previously reached and probably little information concerning them will be given the public except some predigested pap. Public pressure may cause these restrictions to be removed before the conference begins, but if it should not, then this denial of information vital to the successful workings of democracy may, and probably will, become the pattern for the more serious discussions which must inevitably follow the war's military phase. If this were a conference of military strategy, no fair-minded American would object to its secrecy; but when it covers American commitments of food to starving peoples, the object of secrecy is hard to understand. In any event, the American press, the most loyal and trustworthy in the world, can be depended upon not to divulge even any food arrangements which would

jeopardize the war effort to current international diplomacy. Since no one has any reason to know this fact better than the President, this effort to suppress the press in this particular international conference may be regarded as a trial balloon. If it succeeds in floating, American—and worldwide—democracy will have received a slap in the face. For we, the people, must bear the brunt of all commitments, both from our pocketbooks and our tables. Generous, as history proves us always to be, we shall again be willing to share what we have; but when we are asked to pay, we should be permitted to know for what we are paying and under what arrangements. After all, this is *our country!*

THE PRINCIPLE of secret sessions in international matters has brought this war-torn and battle-scarred world to unspeakable grief, both in the past and present. Common sense tells us that if the world is to have peace and do a right-about-face from war, it will have to do a right-about-face from those things which chiefly cause war. Open covenants, openly arrived at, must be one of these innovations. In a people's revolution striving for the justice of true democracy, they are mandatory.

In any postwar organization which may be established, the United States must stand as a beacon of hope and encouragement to all peoples seeking democracy's justice. But we cannot serve as an example unless our own national house is in order. To make it that way is a prime duty of patriotism. Today the world walks in darkness, but it seeks the light of peace, justice and happiness. But it cannot possibly find that light if its chief leader persists in walking in darkness. And dark it is indeed for any democratic nation which is denied the knowledge of what its representative government is doing. Therefore, our very first step in postwar international organization is to make wholly sure that its establishment will be negotiated openly and in accordance with the democratic procedure due those millions who must support it to success.

AND THIS, TOO, IS WASHINGTON

Dolores Green

UNION STATION: Soldiers, sailors, marines; husbands, brothers and sweethearts of the rest of you out there and there and there! Gracious hostesses making every effort to bring comfort and cheer to them all.

Tired faces. Glad faces. Disillusioned faces. Wondering faces. All hurrying back and forth—from cause to effect. A government at war—each a cog in the great machine.

St. Patrick's Church—Christ in the Market Place. Daily streams of workers and shoppers giving to God the things that are God's amidst the homages also due Caesar!

Sixteenth Street—Embassy Row—rather like a blighted garden denuded of its brightest blooms—the now extinct flags of conquered nations. But there's *always* another Spring—when color reappears in even greater glory.

Connecticut Avenue—the street of elegance! Swank shops. Internationally famous hotels. Grandiose Apartment houses. Signs reading: No Children or Dogs Allowed. As if when one reaches *this* rung in the ladder of success, one can stop living. Having no need for such prosaic things as babies and bulldogs!

The new Mellon Art Gallery—where rags and riches stand together, spellbound by some great masterpiece of Madonna and Child.

The Library of Congress String Quartet—lifting to Seventh Heaven by melodies inspired, where even the least can hear again and again the genuine instruments of Stradivarius and Guarnerius bringing to life the music of the masters!

Rock Creek Park—Nature's haven in the midst of maelstrom!

The Zoo—essence of tranquility—where the only business is "monkey business." A fitting setting for meditation on the mystery of human beings stooping to the level of jungle beasts out for a kill!

F Street and the shopping throngs crowding close to see the latest fashions. Other crowds heading for the Movie Mansions. Hollywood brought to the Hub of the war effort.

The cheerful legless man resembling Lowell Thomas whose little fur-coated monkey attracts all the ladies.

St. Aloysius's so close to Capitol Hill. Senator Mead making a visit. David I. Walsh pausing to chat with a friend.

St. Mary's where throngs crowd each service every Monday at the perpetual novena in honor of the Miraculous Medal.

Immaculate Conception—other throngs crowding the church to capacity every Friday for the perpetual novena to Our Lady of Sorrows.

Brookland—the little Rome of America—housing that great institution of learning—the Catholic University of America and the magnificent monument to Our Lady, the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Monsignor Sheen walking briskly across the Campus to give one of his famous classes in Philosophy.

Trinity College—where girls become the women of tomorrow in every sense of the word.

Priests, Brothers, Sisters, and under-grads hurrying to and from the University with bulging brief cases. Profound theses unraveling the mystery that is civilization and the Brotherhood of Man and the Fatherhood of God.

The Franciscan Monastery—a bit of ancient Palestine and Rome brought to modern days. Here war-weary nerves can be soothed for a time by "that peace which the world cannot give." A storehouse of reserved strength—the peace and quiet of the shrines and valley—infusing a bit of that strength to make "carrying on" a little easier.

Good Friday's evening service at the Monastery—the Burial of Christ. A soul-stirring scene. Justice Frank Murphy a reverent spectator.

Soldiers' Home—a paradise of country side in the heart of a bursting city—whose inmates live in retrospect wars of another date. Whose happy privilege it is, too, to have the "Angels of the Battlefield" (Sisters of Charity from Emmitsburg) relieve them of their bodily woes and bring peace to their final days.

This, and more, is Washington of world focus. Living, loving, worrying, hating, striving—still in the midst of all Christ walking the crowded streets calling to those in high and low places: "Come to Me, all ye that labor and are heavily burdened and I will refresh you."

"WHOSE FATHER ARE YOU?"

William W. Buechel

LAST summer while on a short Sunday afternoon drive not far from home, I chanced to stop at a farmhouse advertising: "Fresh Eggs For Sale." I walked up the drive to the front porch on which was sitting a very old man, in his nineties, I would say. Before I had had the opportunity to inquire about the price of the fresh eggs advertised, the old man slung a burning and, at first hearing, a somewhat ridiculous question at me.

"Whose father are you?" are the words which greeted me. In saying them he never blinked an eye nor was there the slightest sign of recognition on his wrinkled face. He exploded those words, unintelligible words to me, and that was all. Not another word did he utter nor did he even look at me again.

Needless to say, confusion reigned within me. It was impossible for me even to think clearly. The words he spoke actually stunned me. There was neither rhyme nor reason to them, it seemed to me. I, a perfect stranger, to be accosted with so personal and sacred a question! What right had he to ask such a thing of me? What business of his was it that I actually am the father of two fine and healthy boys? He knew neither me nor them. Just what difference would it make if I told him one was Billy Junior, aged six years, and the other, Paul, aged three years?

Welcome to my bewildered self was the sound of footsteps coming toward the door from inside the house. A man in his late forties came out onto the porch and asked my business. Gladly I told him it was eggs I wanted and, too confused to ask the price as is my wont, I purchased some. I mentioned the episode I had had with the man on the porch who, I found out, was this man's father. He dismissed the whole affair with the remark that his extreme old age had gotten the better of him.

But had it? Was this after all but one of the foibles of an aged and rapidly dying mind? Was

this just a silly saying of second childhood? I really do not know. Maybe it was. Maybe it wasn't. Personally, I am inclined to think that it wasn't.

I believe that way back in that old man's life there is a story connected with that question. A tragic story, doubtless, and one which left an indelible stamp on the man's brain. So awful (I use the word advisedly), so awful, in fact, that it was the only thought focused on his mind in his old age. Why was it that he spoke those very words to whom-

ever he met and never attempted to supplement them in any way? Could it be that a tremendous struggle was going on within him before the last slender thread of life would snap and hurl him into Forever—a pitched battle between the spiritual forces of good and evil—between God and the devil?

Was the devil taunting him with that question before he'd arrive for Judgment before the Throne of God? Was the Prince of Evil reminding him of sins of his early manhood when unwanted children were denied the right to live—were perhaps even murdered before they had the chance to breathe God's pure air? Was Satan showing him sons and daughters of his who, because of his bad example, were roaming the highways and byways of the

earth seeking in sin for a happiness that can be found only in God? Only God knows and understands the inner workings of the mind and therefore He alone can fathom the depths to which a soul will struggle trying to liberate itself from the oftentimes strangling chains of memory.

But the vital question before us today is: Will God ask us: "Whose father are you?" when we stand before Him for Judgment? Most certainly He will. Upon the honest answer to that question (and before God's throne there can be naught but an honest answer) may depend our fate for eternity. The response to that question may well mean either Joy or Misery, either Happiness or Sorrow,

SIMPLICITY

I feel that I shall never rise
Above the common clay,
Nor go beyond those humble things
I meet from day to day.

I know that I shall never walk
Along the path with kings;
All that I ask is just to know
The love of simple things.

Somehow I do not want to leave
The path I tread to-day,
Lest I should miss the King of Kings
Who passes by that way.

Celestine Hamost

either Heaven or Hell.

You will not dare answer that burning question if you know that you are only a "could-have-been-if-I-had-wanted-to-be" father, a father of dreams only—one who was cowardly afraid to assume the sweet burden of raising children; or worse, one who preferred his own pleasure and convenience to the noble and heavenly task of raising children for the Eternal Kingdom.

You will not dare answer that searching question if you know that your children are on the road to Hell because *you* would not steer them right, because you thought that it was none of *your* business what grown-up children were doing with *their* spare time, because *you* did not give them the example of a good Catholic father by *doing* for God every day.

You will not dare to answer that eternal question then because then you will know that an answer is not needed before the great Searcher of men's hearts. There nothing will be hid. All will be laid bare.

On the other hand, how easy it will be for a good father to stand before God's throne on that eventful day and, when asked: "Whose father are *you*?" he will perhaps look back towards earth and proudly point out his children to the Lord. "There, Lord, is Mary, my oldest. See what a pure heart and undefiled body she has; and there, Lord, is Johnny, fine and upright and honest; and over there, Lord, is Joey who, I know now, will someday be one of your priests, dear Lord; and with him is Ann, my youngest, not yet 10 years old but oh, so sweet and unselfish. There they are, Lord, all of them, and all of them good and pure and—well—just wonderful."

And can't you hear the good Lord say smilingly to him: "Your family is My joy. *You* are My joy. To you have I given a share in My divine Fatherhood, and you have not been found wanting. Enter, Catholic father, into blissful eternity."

In the world today, too many Catholic men look upon fatherhood as a state of life to be avoided for as long a period as possible. They think in terms of convenience to themselves rather than the good of the Church, of society, and of their own spirituality. If God graciously sends them a child, they do not consider it a blessing from Heaven, for it means that the family budget must be stretched to include an extra mouth and that in turn means

less money for the frivolities of life, less money for "good times." And then there's always that dandy excuse of sickness and doctor's bills and especially the high cost of living nowadays.

Anyone who is a father can readily explode all these theories. Good times? You never know the meaning of that phrase until you do have children of your own. The happiness and the real pleasure they give you can never adequately be described by a pen as poor as mine. Sickness? Doctor's bills? Naturally all children of Adam are subject to sickness and death, and infants are no exception. If you are a good Catholic father, God will take care of you and yours, believe me. High cost of living? This one—the most frequent excuse made—really deserves a hearty laugh because the excuse does not hold water from a practical point of view. Except for the initial cost of hospital and doctor you will find, as I have, that there is very little extra drain on your budget for almost a couple of years. After that, you will no longer look upon your child in terms of a budget.

The privilege of being a father is a divine privilege. The state gives you the right and the privilege of voting. When the polls open, you hasten to cast your vote for Senator Blabber or Congressman DuLittle. How much more should you hasten to partake of that fatherhood which springs from the Fatherhood of God? You are one of the sovereign people when you cast your ballot at the polls. You are a counter-part of God the Father when you share in His creative power by becoming the father of a child.

Father's Day will be celebrated on June 20 this year. To be sure, do not forget your own father on that day, whether he is still among the living or has already been called to answer the question at the beginning of this article.

But also, and especially, *remember yourself*. If you are a father, make up your mind to be a good one and take vigorous steps in that direction. If you are married and have not yet been sent a wonderful bundle from Heaven, then get down on your knees today and every day and ask God the Father to allow you to share in His Fatherhood some way, some day. Should you still be among the so-called blessed single class, pray God to send you a good Catholic wife who will enable you to participate in His Divine Fatherhood.



CINDERELLA

AND COUPON No. 17

Frances Denham

PROBABLY when you're seventeen you don't have to imagine yourself a lot of different beautiful heroines and dream that swell things happen to you, but when you're thirteen you do. I'm thirteen and I get a good bit of imagining done and I'm not just clacking my teeth when I say that. When I read a story or see a movie I sit and dream that I am the main girl... like Snow White or Mrs. Miniver's daughter-in-law, and stuff like that.

I could always have Bob Jones for the hero; he lives next door and likes me more than any other girl at Holy Cross School but he's very childish, being just fourteen. A hero should be older and real good looking like Lieutenant Donald Jones, who is Bob's uncle and a first lieutenant in the navy. He was at Pearl Harbor and was sent back to the United States for something, so he's visiting his sister, Bob's Mom.

I was just in a hissy about him but he acts like I'm eleven instead of old like I am. If he could see me in my new formal Mom bought he'd probably think I was seventeen and if I really was seventeen I know he'd be in love with me and we'd probably get engaged before he leaves for war again.

He has been calling me his little Cinderella ever since "that night," which I'll tell you about later. I don't like him to call me that because he certainly doesn't act like Cinderella's prince. He just pats me on the head like my own father does and laughs about my shoes, which I don't like. Besides not having him act like the prince there are other differences between the real Cinderella and me, Ruthy

Mary Chambers. First Cinderella left the ball at the perfectly thrilling hour of midnight; I got home from Holy Cross school at half after four in the afternoon, which is not romantic or anything. Her slippers were small and shining glass; mine were not even high-heeled, on account Mom won't let me have high-heels; mine were stout saddle oxford and kind of large. Mom says that my feet possibly won't grow any more and Tip (that's my brother) says he hopes not, on account they spread all over our four lots as they are.

Well anyway my Oxfords were new and purchased with precious coupon No. 17 plus six of my father's dollars. I don't remember what kind of weather the first Cinderella had for the ball but my particular afternoon was balmy; even the lettuce in father's Victory Garden was real high. Connie Strunk, she's my very favorite friend, got the idea for us to go barefoot just around in her father's potato patch, on account the potatoes were not up and the ground was all plowed and soft because of a rain we'd had. I left my slippers on our back porch and Connie and I went barefooted. Then father came and I had to go home for dinner and I put on my old tennis shoes 'cause Sister had told us how careful we must be with our shoes. She explained to us that the three coupons must last a year. I know Connie held up her hand to tell Sister that there pairs were not enough and Sister told her that we were very fortunate and we should think of the children in other lands who did not have even one pair a year and then Sister also told us about Valley Forge when



the soldiers didn't even have shoes, and so Connie looked at me and I looked at her and I decided to make my slippers last just as long as possible and really appreciate them.

That night father had me do my home work because he wanted me to finish school with real high grades, so I did not go out any more. Mom thinks I'm too young for a permanent, so she has to do my hair up on curlers on account it's real straight and long. Curlers are very hard to sleep on unless you lie at just a certain angle—but I like long curls the next day, which is why I don't mind sleeping on the bumps of hair wound round curlers.

Real late in the night I awakened and my first thought was my new slippers. I had left them out on our porch; they might be gone next morning. I would not only have no shoes but Sister would look at me and think that I was just like Benedict Arnold, another American who had betrayed his country. She said that wasting food or clothing, or abusing any privilege we have is a form of treason. I felt just something fierce and if I could just get my shoes in the house everything would be all right. I was kinda scared on account the house was dark but I went to the porch. I looked just where I had left my slippers but they were gone! I was sick all over—you know that awful feeling you get inside you when you have to get up to speak a piece—and then our door, which locks when it shuts, blew shut and there I was locked out and no shoes. I knew that children did die from exposure something awful but the night was warm and the moon was shining all silvery around everywhere so I probably wouldn't die. I would live with my shoes gone and everyone would think I was a traitor just like Benedict Arnold, and then who should walk up

the Jones's walk but Lieutenant Donald, himself? That was perfectly gorgeous until I happened to remember that my hair was done up in strange little lumps all over my head, which made me look very silly—also I was barefooted and also I had a smock over my gown, which looked very silly. Why could I not have had my hair fixed really lovely, and why couldn't I have had on satin mules and a long silk house-coat—and then why couldn't have the Lieutenant found me locked out of my house? No—it was awful and I just looked like a scream. He saw me and came running over. "Ruthy, whatever is the matter," he wanted to know. I had to tell him everything and I could not help crying, for I knew that even if I were seventeen we could never be engaged on account he was a very brave sailor and I was a girl Benedict Arnold.

He patted me and said that the first thing was to ring the bell and get my father to let me in. He just smiled at me, and he did that to keep from laughing out loud on account I looked like a gunzel, which is Tip's word and which means something real goofey. Father let me in and said not to worry 'cause maybe they could find my oxfords the next day and that if not perhaps he could spare me his coupon No. 17—you know how swell fathers are. I just could not sleep very well and I wondered if they would do anything with me

for being like Mr. Arnold the man I spoke of.

The next morning was Saturday and father went to his office while I helped Mom with the cleaning. Father hadn't been gone hardly any time until he was back and with him was policeman Hanehran, and I could think of just one reason for policeman Hanehran being with father. I wished that the night before had been so that I could have died of



Mary's Gospel Book

In my gilt Gospel Book,
Spread out upon my knee,
I read each day
With boundless bliss;
For, by each changing look
That leaves its trace
Upon God's Infant Face,
Truth clearly speaks to me,
And then, with fond embrace,
I homage pay
With a kiss.

Placidus Kempf, O.S.B.

exposure. I wondered if my folks would visit me in the jail and if Sister would miss me at school. And then across our yard came Lieutenant Jones and I heard the lieutenant say, "It was almost eleven when I found Ruthy out here and the shoes were gone at that time, the poor little kid was scared out of her wits."

See, he was still thinking of me as a little kid!

Mother went out on the porch and father said, "Well Mother, poor little Ruthy's shoes may have saved us from being murdered last night."

Mom was all excited and when I saw that I might be a real honest true heroine I went out on the porch too, and the Lieutenant pulled my curls, which Mom had not taken down.

Mom asked father to tell her all about it and father said that policeman Hanehran could do a better job of it and so he told us. You see we have a defense plant in our town and I guess wherever there's a defense plant you can always find a spy. I guess like Sister said at school that in the presence of good, evil tries to lurk. Well anyway there was a real honest true saboteur who worked there, and he had been given orders to blow up the plant. Well what did he do but make himself some stilts and he was going to steal some good citizen's shoes and put them on the stilts and then those tracks would be found at the plant and by the time they proved the citizen innocent the spy would be out of town and at some other plant. Now I could just hide my face here because when the spy found my

oxfords on the porch I guess maybe he thought that they belonged to my father, or maybe to Tip, on account he just used them. Well when they found the foot prints (you remember I told you about the rain we'd had) the Lieutenant thought that they were too deep for the size of the shoe and he began to suspect something, so he and the policeman sort of got together and figured it all out and they got the saboteur and he confessed.

Lieutenant Jones told policeman Hanehran he should tell them how he first got a clue as to how to get the spy and the policeman said that he wasn't on duty earlier in the evening and that he had gone to Church and it was on the way home that he happened to see a man slinking along with stilts and he got suspicious, and Mom said she guessed that if all of us went to Church we should be able to capture all of our enemies and Lieutenant Jones looked at her and said, "Yes, enemies like lack of faith, doubt in God's goodness, and forgetting to pray—those conditions are like saboteurs, Mrs. Chambers," and Mom said "Yes" and that that was what she meant. I did not understand that very well and while I was trying to figure it out Lieutenant Jones said that I should have Connie meet us at the drug store and that he would get Bob and we would all go have a drink, or even ice cream sodas if the drug store had the ice cream. That was just grand I thought but I had to have him wait until I had the curlers off my hair, and he said that my shoes were in the shining parlor and we would pick them up down town—my Oxfords on Coupon No. 17!

Life and Times of St. Meinrad

"The Apostolic Life"

Peter Behrman, O.S.B.

IN THE year 817, five years before Saint Meinrad was made a monk at Reichenau, a radical reform of the Benedictine Order was inaugurated by St. Benedict of Aniane. This second Benedict, though undoubtedly inspired by a laudable zeal for monastic discipline, lacked the broadness of vision of his great name-sake, the Patriarch of Western Monks. He had read and studied all known works

on monastic discipline but failed to realize that the Holy Founder had not only done all this three centuries earlier but had furthermore by a stroke of genius all his own, laid down in the Holy Rule those broad but basic monastic principles that further growth and perpetuity and at the same time contain within themselves the germ of periodic rejuvenation of the Monastic families that constitute the Order

of St. Benedict. Modeling it after the Family of God on earth, the Catholic Church, on the one hand and on the Christianized Roman family on the other the Holy Patriarch constituted his monastic family in such a way as to be governed not so much by a display of power and authority as by the wisdom and benevolent discretion that characterized the ancient Roman *Pater Familias*.

Benedict of Aniane stressed centralization and regimentation to the curtailment of the rights and liberties necessary for the proper functioning of the individual monastic families. Urged on by greater zeal than prudence he prevailed upon the Emperor Louis the Pious to convoke a general chapter of Benedictine Abbots at Aix La Chapelle, where under his leadership a uniform code of discipline was issued regulating in minute detail the monastic observances in every Abbey of the Empire. It was furthermore decreed that every Abbey was to send two monks to Aniane to the "Model Monastery," established and governed by Benedict, who were to be "inoculated" with the spirit of the reform. From Reichenau Tattu and Grimald were sent. Finally, to clinch the reform, as it were, and to see to it that the decrees of the General Chapter would be executed observers were placed in every monastery.

Providentially the reform did not proceed beyond its initial stage. It was permitted to lapse before it would effect any radical change in the general constitution of the Benedictine Order; luckily, however, not until the spirit of the reform had been carried into nearly every monastery of the Empire and the thought of reform had been brought close to the hearts of many monks. Thus was renewed in some measure the "Apostolic Life," that high ideal which every true monastic reform of the Middle Ages strove to foster.

In the days of St. Meinrad the term "Apostolic Life" was used in a sense quite different from that in which it is used in our own day. Ministers of the Word of God, and all those who devote themselves to the active life of preaching and the spread of the Faith are now frequently looked upon as leading an Apostolic life, and rightly so according to the now commonly accepted meaning of the term. But during the first twelve centuries of the Christian era those were understood to lead the Apostolic life who lived a life similar to early Christians of Apostolic times such as is indicated in Acts, chapter 4:32-36, viz: "Now the multitude of the believers were of one heart and one soul, and not one of them said that anything he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common." Nor was there anyone among them in want. For those who owned

lands or houses would sell them and bring the price of what they sold and lay it at the feet of the Apostles, and distribution was made to each according as any one had need."

Fraternal charity, Community life, and common ownership of goods is stressed in the above quoted passage from the Acts. Other texts could be cited to round out the picture of Apostolic Life revealing among other traits preeminently such deep faith and such glowing charity as to produce a spirit of almost complete "other-worldliness" so that it may be said in truth of the Christians of apostolic times that they were indeed in this world but not of this world, for in thought as well as in desire they dwelt in heaven and in eternity.

That the Christians of Apostolic times received the first fruits of the Redemption is not only attested by history, but it would appear to be also necessitated by their providential position as being, as it were, a supernatural "ferment" that was to Christianize the whole civilized world in a comparatively short period of time. For it was through their edifying example, their Christian charity, and their holiness perhaps more than through preaching that the Holy Spirit in less than three centuries wrought a Christian atmosphere in a World that had been steeped for many centuries in darkest paganism. During the times of the persecutions, due, as it would seem, to the special graces Our Lord promised to His faithful souls in times of stress, and the more or less constant expectancy of a Martyr's crown, great numbers of Christians followed closely in the footsteps of the Apostles and lived a life of perfection, but when the persecutions ceased, many, finding that they could enjoy the pleasures of this world and possess its goods unmolested, became enamored of them and centered their thoughts and desires on the things of this world rather than on those of the next. Thus gradually Christian standards were lowered and the ordinary Christian life became sufficient for the rank and file of Christians, while the Apostolic Life became the ideal of a chosen few who, cutting the ties that bound them to this world, went into seclusion or into the wilderness where first alone, then in groups, finally in monasteries they devoted themselves to a life of perfection, their ideal being the life lived by the early Christians under the guidance of the Apostles. And so it came to pass that the monastic life, properly lived, became identified with the Apostolic Life. And so identified it was known to Cassian, to St. Augustine, to St. Jerome, to mention but a few of the Fathers of the Church, while St. Benedict refers to it in this same sense in the Holy Rule when he says of his followers that "they

are never more truly monks than when imitating the life of our Fathers, the Apostles, they live by the labor of their own hands."

In two other places, viz., when speaking of the distribution of goods amongst the brethren and in admonishing them to avoid in the sale of goods the frauds of Ananias and Sapphira, St. Benedict refers directly to the Apostolic Life. Other references are not so specific, but the entire structure of the Holy Rule is so permeated with the spirit of the gospel, and is so Christo-centric, as to leave little room for doubt that the ideal that St. Benedict had before his mind's eye while writing his Rule was the Apostolic Life.

Since then the Apostolic Life is the model of all true Benedictine Monasticism. Every true reform of Benedictine life can have for its only aim the reestablishment or a closer approach to the Apostolic Life. That this was also the mind of St. Benedict of Aniane regarding monastic reform becomes evident to any one who peruses his *Concordia Regularum*, and although we have no definite information how successful Benedict's efforts were in the various monasteries of the Empire, statistics show that at Reichenau during the first decade or two after the introduction of the reform the number of postulants was surprisingly great. This would seem to be a rather definite indication that there was a high standard of monastic discipline at Reichenau at the time St. Meinrad was made a monk. We also know that love of prayer, especially of the Divine Office, the spirit of mortification, and fraternal charity, the three main props of the Apostolic Life in a community, flourished at Reichenau at this time.

We may presume that few if any of the many postulants that begged for admittance at Reichenau embraced the Apostolic Life so fervently as did St. Meinrad. What he solemnly promised to God on the day he was made a monk he was firmly determined to keep. Having put his hand to the plow he did not look back. He had promised to seek after perfection, and he perseveringly sought after it. An old chronicle says of him that he was always ready to obey, that he was rigorous in the practice of mortification, persevering in prayer and untiring in the practice of fraternal charity. It is further noted

that his virtue was securely grounded in humility, and that he put into actual practice the twelve degrees of humility which constitute St. Benedict's ladder of perfection.

Meinrad was a learned man and may be ranked among the best scholars of his day. Shortly after his profession he was bidden by Erlebald, his Abbot, to let the light of his learning and piety shine in the school connected wth the Abbey. His success as a teacher was remarkable. He won the respect of his pupils by his noble bearing and captivated their admiration by his learning. The imparting of knowledge was not his only aim as a teacher. Training in virtue and the building of character seemed to him just as necessary if not more important for the pupils than the acquisition of knowledge. So well did Meinrad acquit himself of his task as a teacher that he was found qualified later to be placed at the head of the school which the Monks of Reichenau conducted at Bollingen.

Much of the time not spent in Choir and in the class room Meinrad spent in his cell, occupied with the study and reading of Holy Scripture. He himself had made a copy of the Bible, writing every word with his own hand; and by daily study and meditation, the truths of Holy Scripture became so deeply imprinted on his mind and heart that his character gradually became more and more molded according to its principles and teachings.

Next to Holy Scripture and the Holy Rule of St. Benedict, the Institutes and Conferences of Cassian, were the subject of Meinrad's constant study. It is to be noted that probably no one has ever written so admirably about the Apostolic Life as Cassian. Nor

has any ever more closely identified, in principle, the monastic life with the Apostolic Life. There is therefore little room for wonderment if, by means of his study of the Institutes of Cassian, Meinrad was gradually led to live the Apostolic Life ever more perfectly. In fact, so thrilled was Meinrad with the lives of the holy hermits described in the Conferences of Cassian that the desire to become a hermit himself gradually began to take definite form in him; and with the permission of his abbot he later became a hermit. But of this, more at some future date.



CHRISTIAN DEMOCRACY

The Fifth Article

STALINISM VS DEMOCRACY

H. C. McGinnis



RUSSIAN policy under Stalin is so changed from that under Lenin and Trotsky that perhaps a better name for the present Soviet system would be Stalinism rather than Communism. Just why Marxian Communism, claimed so perfect by its advocates, should need reforming within the first quarter century of its practice is beyond all comprehension until one imagines what changes Communism would make in democratic America. Then one realizes that even American Communists, now so blatant in their praises of Moscow's perfection, would be the most rabid in demanding that Communism's intolerable conditions be mitigated. The dreams of fanaticism are one thing: the realistic products of actual existence of a thing are quite another. Either pure Marxist Communism or present day Stalinism would completely wipe out those freedoms which Americans, including American Communists, cherish most.

In many quarters, any current criticism of Communist ideology is considered Red-baiting and somewhat unpatriotic. But Red Russia as an important military ally and as an ideological bedfellow are too entirely different things. One needn't be considered in the light of the other. Russia's contribution to a United Nations' victory will be considerable, but it must be remembered that it is not voluntary. Russia is protecting herself against attack and her defense of her homeland has won the world's admiration. But the qualities now being shown by the Russians are inherent to Russians, originating scores of generations ago, and are not products of Communist theories. Furthermore, if the rank and file of Russians were as enthusiasti-ally Communistic as American Communists would have us believe, Stalin would never have found it necessary to install Red Commissars as co-commanders with trained Russian officers, even in comparatively small units. The always warm rifle barrels of OGPU firing squads are further proofs that Stalin still finds Communism not altogether popular.

It must not be forgotten for an instant that Russian Communism is absolutely totalitarian. Moreover, Stalin is the strongest totalitarian dictator in

existence. His decisions are not the results of astrological computations as are Hitler's, nor does he indulge in meaningless breast-thumping like Mussolini. His reasoning is calm, cold-blooded, and very realistic. He is utterly ruthless and his mass murder of millions of this countrymen stands as history's most colossal crime. Furthermore, he has a deep and abiding distrust of all democracies. Those Americans who, their reasoning temporarily unbalanced by Russia's remarkable military success, now maintain that this nation should fervently clasp to its breast all things Russian, should remind themselves that Stalin himself has not changed toward the democracies. Whatever friendliness he now displays is demanded by war's exigencies and the fact that the democracies are furnishing him highly necessary food and military supplies. But even his closest allies know no more of what is going on within his country or of his military condition than he chooses to tell them. The war was far beyond its opening stages before American war correspondents were permitted a very brief visit to only certain sectors of the Russian front. Even when the Caucasus was in grave danger, with the probable loss of its rich oil reserves looming as a severely damaging blow, Stalin refused all offers of help from the British Near East army which had to remain inactive while Hitler's legions moved victoriously forward. Come what may, Stalin wanted no democratic people, not even defending soldiers, on Russian soil. Evidently he preferred to lose the war first. Russian military victories may have lessened, for some unaccountable reason, much of America's distrust of Communism, but Stalin's cold blooded reasoning tells him that the present relations are purely military.

This makes it appear certain that Communism and democracy will clash when the situation in post-war Europe and Asia require reconstruction. Stalin, even though he may not be presently interested in making his ideology a world-wide movement, realizes the value of having considerable Communist strength within the borders of his neighbors. He has spent millions of rubles on the development

of Communism in China and India and his success, especially in China, has been considerable. When Nazism is overthrown in Germany, he certainly will not want a strong democratic power too close to him. Already he has stated that Russia's interests demand his postwar occupation of the Baltic republics. With Europe's most powerful army at his back, the Russian dictator will be in a powerful position to insist upon a large share of his future demands. At least he won't have to tolerate any pushing around by the democracies. Since a war-exhausted world will probably be anxious to compromise all questions rather than engage in another gruelling struggle, Stalin is bound to extend his influence.

What influence will this have upon the American way of life? Must Americans accept a democracy colored by Communistic principles in the future? Will an ideological compromise between these two great forces work out satisfactorily? It will, if the current utterances of some of our leaders are to be believed. In a comparatively recent speech, one of our highest political leaders extolled the virtues of Russian current practices and called for cooperation and mutuality all over the world when the war is finished. Furthermore, he paralleled the Communist and American efforts to effect a happy medium between political and economic democracy. To do this, it was necessary that he disparage somewhat the American Constitution's Bill of Rights. To what extent he would moderate the Bill of Rights, he did not commit himself; but since he is an ardent admirer of the Stalin regime, any proposed alterations would evidently be along Stalin's dictatorial and liberty-killing lines. In a later address, this same American leader proclaimed that, after the war, the United Nations must supervise the educational system of the defeated Axis powers to make sure that their future generations will be indoctrinated with the right kind of thinking. This brings up the vitally important question of just what does this gentleman consider the right kind of thinking. From his fre-

quent utterances one is forced to conclude that a compromise between democracy and communism is, to him, the ultimate in perfection. It had better be that—with communism predominating in the compromise—if he expects Russian support; for even an idiot must realize that Russia will never, never permit nearby Germany, Hungary, Bulgaria and Rumania to be indoctrinated exclusively with ideals which are directly opposite to its own. Stalin and his henchmen haven't the most infinitesimal iota of tolerance of anything they don't like, most especially when they have the physical power to back up their dislikes.

Since the above utterances came from an American whom even his worst political enemies freely admit is most sincere in his expressions, it must follow that his eulogies of Stalinism came from the depths of his heart and were not hypocritically intended to soft-soap a much needed military ally. And, most unfortunately, this particular American is not alone in his beliefs. He belongs to a small but powerful group of leaders who feel much the same and who also believe it their God-given mandate to do all America's thinking. Since this group is now in a powerfully strategic position to shape

Stalingrad

This city stands no longer clean and proud
As in the days before that panzer thrust
Plunged suddenly to leave disputed dust
Protesting towards the heavens bold and loud.
Each shambled brick bears tribute to the crowd
Of stubborn sons' and daughters' humble trust
In Providence and through this hallowed rust
Hope's torch illuminates a silver cloud.

It has been said that Russia in re-birth
Abandoned God full many years ago,
Yet Stalingrad, knee deep in blood-soaked earth
Watched patiently for evidence of snow.
If Russia had no God before this stand
Then God returned to grasp their failing hand.

Pvt. John Minnich Wilson
U. S. Marine Corps.

this nation's international relations, the public must exercise its Constitutional right to deliver a mandate to its representatives. This mandate must be strong and convincing, for the above group has shown a marked disposition to act without consulting public wishes or to disregard them when expressed—unless expressed with a force which presages their repudiation at the polls. With society's reconstruction imminent, the American public must now definitely decide if the American way of life is to return to the highly moral ideals of the Founding Fathers, continue the materialism of its present Liberalism, compromise with Communism, or adopt some other form of totalitarianism. The first step to be taken to arrive at this decision is a clear understanding of the differences between true democracy and communism, together with theulti-

mate destinies of each.

Some of the differences between true or Christian democracy and atheistic Communism lie in the dissimilarity in the methods these two ideologies use to achieve similar goals. For it must be admitted that both have many congruous aims. These similarities will be discussed as we go along. Perhaps it is this similarity in spots which causes well-meaning Americans to be willing to compromise democracy with communism, not realizing that an ideology cannot be half moral and half pagan any more than society can be half free and half slave. Just because true democracy and communism are both opposed to the evils arising from Liberalism's ideas concerning the privileges of rugged individualism is absolutely no proof that democracy and communism are one and the same thing. Stalin and Mussolini, for instance, are both violently opposed to democracy, yet their ideologies are highly antagonistic toward each other. It has always been true that two forces may be against the same evil, yet one combats it morally and the other immorally.

The political differences between democracy and communism are easily disposed of. Under communism, the citizen has no political rights, having surrendered his political dignity to an absolute dictatorship. Those American Communists who rant and rave about the arbitrary assumptions of power by American politicians after their election would find this assumption increased a thousand fold under communism, only there would be no objections by the governed. Even a baleful glance might bring

a firing squad or a little session in Siberia's salt mines. Those who have had a taste of American bureaucracy and find it nauseating would find to their utter disgust that, under communism, the entire government is based upon bureaucracy. From all reliable and disinterested reports, Russian bureaucracy doesn't function any better than the American variety. The distribution of food, clothing, and other vital necessities of life is most wretched. Transportation and other public facilities suffer similarly.

In Russia, there is no freedom of political opinion. The communist one-party system, like all other one-party systems, tolerates no "loyal opposition" and ruthlessly suppresses all reformers within its own ranks. American soap-box orators who adorn street corners and spout their objections to existing conditions would find themselves living under a strictly enforced silence in a Communist America. Natural born agitators who espouse Communism's cause would find themselves very unhappy should their proposed paradise come into existence. There are no agitators against anything when communism comes into power. There is no free press, no uncensored radio, no right of petition or assembly, no freedom of worship, and no freedom of anything else which Americans take for granted. In short, under communism, political freedom simply doesn't exist at all. Such a system could never exist in America for long, except by forceful imposition. For it is a deeply ingrained American habit to express oneself most freely when the spirit moves.

CATHOLIC INFORMATION

Wanted a Job—any kind of work—no limit to hours—no pay accepted!

WHO IN the world would seek a job such as described above? Hundreds do every year! Hundreds of splendid, intelligent, educated young women—some from our very finest families—are applying for just such jobs in the great Catholic Sisterhood.

"The poor ye have always with you," said our Lord; and in God's scheme of things, He has called to the service of his beloved poor the very flower of womanhood.

In this country alone there are more than 120,000 humble, holy women, joined by the common vow of *poverty, chastity, obedience*. Some of them teach in convent and parochial schools. Others care for impoverished old folks and orphans. Some nurse in hospitals, in homes for cancerous paupers, in leper colonies and 'midst shot and shell on the battlefields. Still others go about begging at restaurants, hotels, and other places for left-over foods and scraps from plates with which to feed the hungry, making their own meals from the remnants left by their charges.

There is no work too difficult, too menial, too revolting for these Angels on earth to gladly undertake for God through His poor, regardless of race, color, or creed. And they earn no money. They possess no earthly thing—not even the clothes they wear. Yet the Catholic Sister is ever-smiling, ever-happy, because she is the "Bride of Christ" and in all things His will is her will.

More than 120,000 nuns in this country alone! What a tremendous national asset! How much would it cost in money and results to replace them with paid workers, who could not, and would not labor with the same devotion and disinterestedness?

Beware of the story of the "escaped" nun. There can be no such thing. Any Sister may freely leave any convent at any time. Beware of him who spreads such poisonous lies, for he is viciously striking at our country's benefactors and at those who are very, very close to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Catholic Information Society of Narberth, Narberth, Pa.

The First Complete Dictionary

Julia W. Wolfe

HAVE you not often wondered who made the first dictionary? Who had the time and patience to compile one? Well, it is to Cardinal Richelieu we owe our dictionary, and the first one was made in France, although a small dictionary was compiled in Latin in 1500 by Ambrose Calepini, a Venetian friar. The history of the French Academy relates many amusing incidents connected with the beginning of this dictionary.

In the early part of the 17th century, when Louis XIII wore the crown and Richelieu wielded the power of France, a number of literary men were wont to meet once a week at the house of one of their associates in the Rue St. Martin, to read and discuss the latest works of writers, to eat a bite, and then stroll the streets of Paris.

Little by little these streets became better known. One day a courtier friend of Richelieu's—Bois Robert, himself a clever writer—was admitted to the fellowship, and was so delighted with what he saw and heard that he reported to Richelieu in glowing terms. A few meetings later he came again, armed with the astounding proposal that this informal society should become a legalized body of men, authorized by Parliament to meet, and that their object should be to "resolve doubts, to strengthen and fix the great body of French words" into a volume.

Innumerable were the objections to this plan raised by the *literati* themselves, by the Parliament, by the King even, but Richelieu was not to be daunted, and he founded the French Academy.

The members of the Academy were limited to forty; any vacancy caused by death was to be filled at once. They met once a week as formerly to discuss literature and to begin the great work of compiling the French words. Many were the jokes made by the gay cavaliers of those old days on this assembly of men. The Forty even laughed at themselves; one of them wrote:

"So, I with hoary head to school
Must like a child go day by day,
And learn my parts of speech, poor fool,
When death is taking speech away."

The letter A was commenced in 1639. Each member would bring to the meeting certain words to be discussed. It is amusing to read the naive acknowledgment of Pellisson—one of the Forty—that the word "Académie" by some strange oversight was forgotten and had to be inserted afterwards.

Richelieu died while the work was still young, but it prospered mightily. When Louis XIV was made Chancellor of the Academy, Colbert and his great master were proud to come to visit the king dressed in a simple Academy gown.

The Academy once elevated two men to vacant seats who refused to accept them. Since that time no one is chosen who has not strongly solicited membership. The title is irrevocable.

In 1659 Queen Christina of Sweden, who had just abdicated, came to visit Paris and demanded to be admitted to the Academy. Never before had this honor been accorded a woman, but the daughter of Gustave the Snow King was not to be refused. The Academy finally invited her, and we know from one of its members what took place at this meeting. He mourns in his report that the Academicians were so excited by the royal guests that the picture of herself, given to the Academy by Christina, was not hung in the room for her visit where she might see it. He tells how the Queen came proudly into the room, sat down and asked many questions of the members and told them to begin work. But those learned men were ill at ease, and instead of bringing into discussion a new letter they merely read over the letter "J". They came to a quotation "Jeux de princes qui ne font"—"Jokes of princes which please only those who make them." At this little quip the Queen laughed heartily and finally withdrew.

There is a curious story about the arm chair. Cardinal D'Estress, one of the members, was an eager worker on the Dictionary, but he suffered greatly from rheumatism. The hard, stiff chair he used was agonizing, and he petitioned Louis XIV to be allowed to bring in a soft chair for his own use. Louis saw the distinction this would make, so he answered the request by sending to the Academy forty upholstered chairs. And often when we hear some one say: "He has an armchair at the Academy," meaning he is one of the Forty, we know from whence the remark.

For thirty-five years the members were at work on the Dictionary. The task seemed interminable. Bois-Robert wrote:

"These six years past they toil at letter F
And I'd be much obliged if Destiny
Would whisper to me, 'Thou shalt live to G.'"

But the last letter was finally reached and in 1694 the first edition of the Dictionary was published.

UP BY BIG BUTTE

by
MARY LANIGAN
HEALY

The Mannings are a family of six, augmented for the present by the arrival from California of two nieces and a nephew to live in Copper City, Montana, until their sick mother is able to return home from the hospital. The shadow of a strike in the mines hovers over the community and the worried wives are trying to settle it in their own way. Julia Manning and Nell Galvin have decided to take the case directly to the Mother of God.

CHAPTER SEVEN

(Continued)

AND DO you think I haven't asked her? Do you think a night passes that I do not tell her beads and beg that she watch over this home of ours?"

"And so do I, Nell, and every Catholic mother in the world. But we must accomplish this together, praying as one. What would you think of a Novena of Rosaries, made by all of us for the self-same intention?"

"About the strike?"

"Put it as you like. For the happiness of our homes."

"And we should be meeting nine days at the church."

"I'm afraid that wouldn't be practical. You see this is a family affair and the entire family should be in it. Like Lucy here. It might be hard for those with little ones to get to the church together. It just seems to me that the Blessed Mother would be even more interested than usual if she saw, say

all of us, each night saying her praises. I think she'd like it, to see mothers showing the tiniest ones the Sign of the Cross and the old folk going down to their knees with the rest and the Hi School girls like Ginny and my two and your John and my Tom, everybody at it in earnest for the thing nearest the heart."

Nell stared at her, then smiled. "I think it would work. She'd never have it in her Mother heart to deny us coming like that to beg her intercession. Why the angels themselves would put in a good word if they saw the ones like Lucy here. You should see how sweet she is at prayer."

"Before night prayer time then," Julia declared, "I'll get a couple of the neighbors out to help me spread the word and we'll just stay home and see what we can do."

Nell said, "Could I be of help going around?"

"No, you keep Miss Lucy here with dry feet." The eyes of the two women met over Lucy's curly head. There had been some bad nights last winter with the two of them fighting pneumonia in the little child. She had become over precious to her mother now when she was already beloved in that special way a last baby often is with a mother of a large family of older ones. "Well, if it wasn't for Lucy."

"You've done enough, Nell, by agreeing with me. And then there's the ginger bread."

"Sure enough, one half hour at 450 fahrenheit."

Julia went then to McGurks. She found old Mrs.

McGurk alone and her face softened at the sight of a caller. "Since Madge got married," she said, honestly I don't know what to do with myself."

"For which I have a solution," Julia said as she carefully slipped off her overshoes and placed them on the porch. The McGurk home was so beautifully kept that one was always inclined to make an extra effort to keep it so. The old lady was all alone but Julia had told Tom just the other night that it wouldn't be long until she found someone else to befriend now that the last set of grandchildren had been raised. Madge the youngest had married and moved away; Philis had married the year before, and the second one, Eileen, had entered the Convent. The three girls were the second set of grandchildren she had mothered and old Al McGurk had kept pluckily on at the mines for all his years so these things could be done. He had a job "on top" but it was exacting nonetheless.

"Want me to be on a committee?" Ma McGurk's eyes gleamed in pleasure.

"I guess you could call it that," Julia said. "Think a stroll in the snow will agree with you?"

"And me with it?" Ma said. "Some soliciting for the bazaar?"

"Not this time, but I'll keep you in mind since you seem so resigned."

"You know me," Ma said.

"I surely do, Ma," Julia replied. "You're the gamest sport in Copper City. Listen, what do you think of this?"

So Ma McGurk and Julia talked it over and ended by dividing a list of names and Julia picked out two more allies to make the calls and when she left the McGurks Ma was already buttoning up the outlandish fur coat she had worn as long as any one could remember. A matching hat went with it and she looked for all the world like Daniel Boone off to conquer the wilderness when she was ready to walk into the street. Julia smiled. She'd like to see any wilderness Ma couldnt conquer at that, once she'd set her mind to it.

Ann Driscoll gave Julia a searching look when the plan was disclosed to her. There were rumors that Ann's husband was absorbing many of the worst theories of the communists and Ann's tense little figure kneeling after Sunday Mass had become a lonely one. Julia had deliberately decided to ask Ann to go out and help organize. She thought that Ann might be able to do some organizing at home for it was known that her Henry loved her well and idolized his three boys. Perhaps a movement like this would have the power to draw him back the way he belonged.

When Ann read the regard and affection in the face of Julia she said, "Of course, Mrs. Manning,

I'll be glad to go."

Before she made her last call, Julia pushed up her coat sleeve and looked at her watch. At the same moment a whistle blew up on the hill. Eleven o'clock. A new shift would be going to work—a line of sturdy men with lunch pail in hand, with scapulars and badges of the Sacred Heart on the breasts of most of them, going out to work for their own. With the beginning of her Novena welling up into her throat Julia was whispering, "Hail Mary, full of grace," when she came to the O'Rourkes. Monica O'Rourke was hanging freshly laundered curtains and had deserted them and opened the door for her before she could knock. "Hello Julia Manning," she said. "Come in and stay for lunch."

"And have my husband out with a posse on my trail with no lunch for him or the rest?"

Monica sighed, "You spoil him of course but it would be a sore temptation for any woman to spoil a man as fine as the Professor." She interrupted herself with a short laugh. "Isn't it the same with all of us? I've pampered my Ed from the start."

"And nothing to show for all your labor but a man who adores you and the children and grandchildren to say nothing of your Charles almost to be ordained."

Monica beamed, "I know, Julia, I know. We are all most heavily blessed." She giggled, in a young way for all her years, "And heavily mortgaged too, if the truth were known." Her face tightened, "If the mines close I don't know what we will do."

So Julia told Monica O'Rourke and with the warm faith of Monica as a remembrance to brighten her steps she started back toward where she could see the Manning house waiting for her.

CHAPTER EIGHT

AT LUNCH time Tom Manning said, "Out with it, Julia. Where have you been and what did you do while you were there? You didn't get those red cheeks by sitting all morning at home."

Dave gave her a grin between spoonfuls of cinnamon scented apple sauce, "Sure she's been out. You can always tell. Whenever it's apple sauce instead of apple pie, the woman's been galivanting."

Sue's round face lifted in attention. "Have you really been up to something, Mother?" Then in an audible off side to Ruthie, "You can never tell what Mother will do."

"You make me sound like a Mata Hari sort of person, Julia objected. "Do you want Uncle Ed and Aunt Kate to read between the lines of Ruthie's letters and snatch her away from such suspicious people as the Montana Mannings?"

Sue dropped her spoon in consternation, "Gosh

no. That would be terrible when Ruthie hasn't even had a chance to ice skate yet." She looked surprised at the laughter which followed her remark. Julia reached over and gave one stubby braid a gentle tug, where it rested on the little girl's shoulder. "Never you mind, pet. Everybody picks on me too."

"Listen to her, the evasive thing," Tom said.

Julia offered another round of hot coffee before she sat down with her own cup neglected in front of her. "You are right, Detective Tracy and Son, I have been out this morning just as your uncanny deductions have led you to surmise."

"It doesn't take a detective to realise he's eating apple sauce instead of apple pie."

"I'll make you an apple pie tomorrow," his mother promised Dave; "just so you won't feel abused." Then she went on, "I don't know how to exactly explain what I've been up to as you so aptly phrase it and that's peculiar in itself. For I've spent the whole morning attempting to explain that very thing."

"Very clear, Mrs. Manning," her husband observed.

"Give the lady air, sir," Dave made a big show of waving his Father down the table.

"To tell the truth," Julia said, "it's a matter that takes a bit of talking and I'd planned to leave it until dinner time."

"Over more apple sauce?"

"No, even over mocha cake."

"And crushed nut frosting?" Sue wanted to know.

"Well maybe," her mother conceded. "I hadn't gotten as far as the frosting yet. But seriously, dinner is usually a better time for discussions than now because everyone is home and then there's more time, I think."

"But now, you have the very human element of curiosity to take into consideration. So you'd better go on so the rest of us can get our minds back on what we have to do. That right, Ruthie?" The shy little girl smiled gratefully at her Uncle for pulling her thus into the midst of things.

Julia looked at them as they settled for her report, "I guess it started at the breakfast table with the talk over the threat of trouble at the mines. I couldn't get the matter off my mind. And the upshot of it was that I had an irresistible urge to get out and attempt to do something if I could."

Tom urged her on, "What did you do?"

She saw his grey eyes were alight with interest. Tom always seemed to be able to catch and pull to the surface the thoughts for which she was groping. "Well, I went calling. To the Galvins, and O'Rourkes

and Vaheys and about ten others around Big Butte Hill." Most briefly she sketched the germ of her idea of united family prayer. The plan of petition to Our Lady to protect all the homes.

"Julia, Julia," Tom said, "undoubtedly you've got something there. Nothing new or original to be sure, but something better than that because it's so old. It's so old and tried that it's sure to work." Reluctantly he stood up, "You were right though in saying the discussion would be better at dinner time. For less than a one o'clock quiz, I wouldn't think of leaving now."

"Why don't you stay, Dad, and give the fellows a break."

"Yourself among them, Dave."

"Incidentally."

"Instead we exit side by side. To be continued Julia?"

"Why yes."

In the afternoon Julia Manning went calling again. It occurred to her that she'd like to talk to Father Rooney and see what he thought of her plan.

As she stepped outside the snow had ceased to fall and for the most part the surface reaching over all the roofs and hills was unbroken and smooth. It was a very lovely sight. She walked briskly the distance of several blocks to the Pastor's house. As she approached she could see the smoke weaving up from his brick chimney stack. So Mrs. Tarrant would have built the fire in his study in which he took such delight. Each year Father and his housekeeper had an argument and each year it came to the same conclusion. According to the housekeeper's account, Father would say, "Now, Mrs. Tarrant, there's no need to bother about a fire in the study. The radiator in the hallway is quite enough and I'm certain you have quite enough to do without bothering with ashes and all that sort of muss." Mrs. Tarrant would mutter then in justification of her unmovable attitude, "As if I'd mind a small task like that if there's any comfort or company for him with his fire. And himself never once considering the many things he's constantly doing for others, things he doesn't have to do at all. Besides, Father Sullivan chops the wood himself. Exercise he calls it." Then the kindly woman would wander from her subject at mention of Father Sullivan, the assistant pastor. "Did you know he used to be written up in all the papers when he was back of the half or something like that on a football team. That of course was before he was ordained." Yes, Mrs. Tarrant was proud of those she served and did not spare her kindly self in the serving.

When Julia rang the door-bell Mrs. Tarrant welcomed her joyfully, "Come in. Come in, Mrs. Manning, please. It's his Reverence of course you've come to see but nevertheless, I'm grateful for a sight of you myself."

"And I'm glad to see you, Mrs. Tarrant." Julia assured her. "How have you been?"

"Fine entirely, and you?"

Waving and beckoning her with her well starched apron, the housekeeper led the caller toward the study. As though Julia did not know the way very well indeed. It was a favorite site for committee meetings on parish affairs and Julia had frequently been assigned to one of these.

"Father is over at the school but should be back any minute. I'm sure he'd like for you to wait in the study." She made it sound a rare privilege to be permitted to wait in the pastor's study. Actually the nominal waiting room at the end of the hall was seldom used. Nevertheless Mrs. Tarrant managed to create the feeling in any current caller that he or she was the recipient of a singular honor, indeed.

Julia had been seated only a short while when Father Rooney came in. He was a tall man, lean, yet of a powerful frame. With a sense of humor and the ability to understand the ways of men, he had become greatly loved the several years he'd spent in Copper City. Julia stood up when he came into the room and he briefly clasped her hand, then said, "Sit down, Julia, and tell me how things are out the Manning way."

"Everything is fine with us, Father."

"That's good." He reached forward and poked at the fire. It did not need his attentions but they were offered as though he couldn't help himself. Julia thought he's like Tom when it comes to an open fire. A fire for them is what a cigarette or a cocktail glass might be in the hand of another man. It's solace and comfort and rest. At the thrust from the poker the flames lept up brilliantly and all the wild little flames hid beneath the log and stuck out saucy red and licking tongues. There was a short silence in the room except for the noises the fire made. It was not an uncomfortable silence. It was as though the fire were purposely given an opportunity to have its say. Snap and crackle went the log. Crackle. Crackle. Snap. Julia spoke over the friendly noise. "I've been around a bit in your parish today, Father."

"Talking your head off no doubt."

"At least doing my share of it."

"Have fun?"

"Yes, I really did." Then in a rush of words the explanation of what had taken her a-visiting came out. Father Rooney was an easy person with whom

to talk. He did not interrupt with questions but rather urged one from time to time with a nod and seemed to be engrossed with whatever was being said. And as Julia talked she seemed to be explaining to herself as well as the priest. It was as though from a wavering foundation something strong and durable were beneath her feet. She knew then why she had become so distressed over the talk of trouble at the mines. It was not that isolated matter which had been so disturbing to contemplate. The mines were merely a symbol of all the other threats to home which were about today. The mines were important because their uninterrupted and peaceful functioning made for the security and well-being of the families whose heads earned wages there. But there were more insidious and serious threats toward happiness of homes than the mines and whether or not their crews walked out on a strike. Everywhere in the world there seemed to be sneers and jeers at the bulwark of the home, at the life—a natural God-fearing family might choose. It was a rebellion against all the enemies of home which had impelled Julia Manning to go trudging out that morning in the snow.

"So," Julia finished, "it seemed to me that it was the safest thing to do to band ourselves together in family prayer so that Our Blessed Mother would take special care of us."

"And I do not doubt that she will." Father said. Nor was there any doubt in the mind of Julia after she had expressed herself.

Father gave the log a lusty poke and a luster of sparks went sputtering. "It has always seemed to me that the world moves in a circle in more ways than one. War and dissension aren't new. Nor is the particular brand of wickedness our era knows. The world has swung into this sort of thing and out of it into the light countless times before." Julia found herself leaning forward. It was as though she were holding her spirit toward the warmth and faith and assurance that Father offered her. It was much the same manner that a hand chilled and numb would reach toward a blaze. It was hard not to become frightened in the world today. It was as difficult not to quail at contemplation of the future years. The scoffers were becoming so loud of late. Oppression was so heavy. And the abuses everywhere. The divorces. The marriages outside the church. The refusal to assume the normal responsibilities of family life. Julia was not one to take on concern with affairs not her own. But these matters touched her very near. They touched her and Tom but most of all the boys and girls entrusted to her care.

(To be continued)

The Abbey Chapter Room

Abbot Ignatius Esser, O.S.B.

ON MARCH 21, 1943, we solemnly dedicated the Chapter Room of St. Meinrad's Abbey. This date, according to common tradition, is the fourteen hundredth anniversary of the glorious death of St. Benedict. No, it is not a new Chapter Room. It was built almost thirty years ago, solid and spacious, as the second story of our library wing. This year the art work and the furnishing of the Chapter Room were completed. For almost thirty years the Chapter Room was used in a positively unadorned condition. Then came a Monk from Europe, the Reverend Gregory de Wit, a Benedictine from Mont César Abbey in Louvain, Belgium. He is an artist—a real genius. Therefore he was asked to decorate our Chapter

Room. He did, and wonderfully, indeed. Unhampered by any prescribed plan or harassing instructions, he reveled in his freedom and produced a work of such inspiring grandeur that all were amazed at the total transformation of walls, floor, ceiling and furnishings in six months time.

We monks use the term "Chapter Room" daily and know exactly what it means. Some of our readers doubtless wonder what a Chapter Room is and why it is so called and what all is done therein. For their sake we offer some paragraphs of explanation. First of all, a monastery or an abbey is the home of a family, a monastic family, a family of Monks. The Monks of an abbey form a most intimate group, with an

Abbot as their Spiritual Father. He takes the place of Christ and rules his sons according to the fulness of the Gospel teaching, commands and counsels. Since the Monks of St. Benedict make a vow of stability, their monastery is their true home on earth for their whole life. Every natural family enjoys a certain measure of family privacy. We speak of the family circle. A circle is a closed thing. Children are born into this closed group as a part of the family circle. When visitors come, they may be most welcome guests, but they are not members of the family. In rare instances, however, persons may be adopted as members enjoying the rights of the family. In the monastic family members are born by their mo-



nastic profession or vows. All have the same Spiritual Father who receives their vows. Together the family of Monks enjoys a family privacy, and their most private place of assembly is the Chapter Room.

For that reason the Chapter Room must be large enough to contain the family group. For the sake of family privacy it has only one entrance, which during a meeting can be easily guarded. This entrance is accessible only from the cloistral seclusion. The Chapter Room is the proper place for family gatherings of the monks for instruction, discussion, and correction.

But whence comes the name "Chapter Room"? The principal monastic instructions and the principles of monastic family formation are drawn chiefly from the Holy Rule of St. Benedict. To imbue the Monks thoroughly with the Holy Rule a "Chapter" from the Holy Rule is daily read to the Monks. In former times this "Chapter" was read each morning after the portion of the Divine Office called Prime, to the monks assembled in their inner or family room. It was their daily sacred instruction before they went forth to their daily work with the blessing of their Father, or Abbot. Eventually this room where the daily "Chapter" was read was referred to as the Chapter Room.

Even today the Chapter Room is a most important part—or the most important part—of an Abbey. It is the place where the family is built up and fostered as a family. Candidates seeking admission to the Community appear before the assembled Monks in the Chapter Room to present their petition for admission to the novitiate or to profession. In the Chapter Room conferences are given to his Monks by the Father or Abbot. Each evening before going to Church for Compline, the monastic family assembles in the Chapter Room for the family spiritual reading. All important meetings for the discussion and decision of things to be done by the Abbey are held in the Chapter Room and are called Chapter Meetings. Persons privileged to attend these meetings are

called Chapter members. For example, if the Community wishes to erect new buildings, to buy land, to contract debts, to establish a new institution, all these and any other weighty matters are decided by vote in the Chapter Room after careful explanation and discussion. The Abbot, as Father, presides at all these meetings. Lastly, in the privacy of the Chapter Room the Monks make public confession to the family members of any violation of the rules whereby they disturbed in any way

would be joy and strength in such family life, just as there is joy and strength in monastic families.

Because the Chapter Room is always in the cloistered part of a monastery for men, it is not accessible to women. Even men visitors to the Abbey are not readily granted permission to view the Chapter Room. It is the most private part of the monastic home. To help such as may never see our St. Meinrad's Abbey Chapter Room form a mental picture of it, the following details are offered. The room is rectangular, almost twenty-five and a half feet wide. The height is almost thirteen feet. The walls are of solid sandstone, twenty-seven inches thick. Floor and ceiling are of reinforced concrete construction. Over the concrete floor is laid an Egyptian buff tile floor with ornamental border. Heavy concrete beams divide the ceiling into eighteen fields or panels. The solitary door is in the middle of the east end wall. The west wall is devoid of openings. The north side and the south side each has six pairs of leaded glass windows. Each single window is six feet and a half high and thirty inches wide. Being set in thick walls the window openings are very deep, which adds beauty to the windows and walls. High-backed dark oak benches offer seating for one hundred and eighty persons. The Abbot's chair is in the middle of the west end, opposite the entrance. On each side of this tall, simple chair, there is a little space, then benches continue on each side to the corner, thence along each side for almost eighty-two feet to the east corners, and thence to each side of the doorway. On the long north and south side, a second row of long benches is in front of the benches against the walls. All benches are on wood platforms higher than the tile floor level; front benches are on a five-inch high platform; rear benches are still another five inches higher.

In subsequent articles the twenty-four window designs will be explained and the ceiling and wall decorations will be described.



Lollipops

Lo!

Sugared wafers still
A baby's hungry cry
In haste.
So
Consecrated wafers fill
With *sweetness* from the *sky* (*)
Each taste.

Placidus S. Kempf, O.S.B.

(*) V. Thou didst give them bread
from *heaven*.
R. Containing in itself all
sweetness.

(Versicles at Benediction)



the general discipline and charity of the family life.

Our Christian families would do well to learn from the monastic families some of these beautiful practices that nurture and sustain the life led in common by any group. How grand and beneficial, for example, for any family, if all the members met at stated times in the privacy of the home for instruction, for spiritual reading, for correction of faults that disturb the family peace and charity, for discussion and decision of things to be done by the family as a unit. There

A Letter from a Seminarian

My dear Mrs. Geary,

You should be expecting this letter, for every year when Saint Meinrad is preparing to send forth her seminarians into the "outside" world, a letter travels from me to you, a letter expressive of the special thoughts which so frequently pop into my head during the late spring months. Of course, it goes almost without saying that at the Consecration of every Mass the Lord and I have a few-seconds chat about you in which I beg ever more abundant blessings and graces for her to whom I am so indebted. But I particularly mentioned "special" thoughts, since June days always mean the completion of another lap of my twelve year journey from high school days to the Altar and the Sacred Priesthood and as each successive year is checked off and ordination grows steadily nearer I become increasingly cognizant of the value of, and accordingly, more grateful for, your assistance.

But for your financial assistance I could not continue my studies. The import of those words! I should be compelled to turn away from Christ's "Follow Me." The Church would be deprived of another Christ, of another voice calling the people to God, another voice preaching, consecrating, absolving, blessing, exhorting, teaching, correcting, baptizing, anointing,—another voice, human, yes, with man's weaknesses and frailties but so closely attuned to the divine Voice by reason of exalted sacerdotal privileges and powers and graces that the two voices—human and Divine, the Priest's and Christ's—are as one.

How truly heartbreaking it is, knowing of many splendid, outstanding boys prohibited from beginning or forced to discontinue their studies in the seminaries because of financial difficulties. The gratifying results achieved by means of the annual seminary collections must not be minimized but, on the other hand, American Catholics cannot forget the seminaries from one year's collection until the next, complacent in the assurance that everything is as it should be. Today, especially, the vines are loaded down with ripe fruits, wasting away because the laborers are so few. The whole world, wearied and sick beneath its burden of war and sin and social confusion is a plowed field with furrowed lips turned up to the Church whence alone can come the seeds of Life. Where are the laborers for the Lord's vineyard and the planters in the Lord's field to come from unless yearly more and more patrons come to the aid of deserving students for the Priesthood? Most people do not realize as you do (and after these years of expenditures you certainly should) the great expense involved in educating a priest-to-be.

Please forgive my mental meanderings but my mind is so often occupied with such thoughts. I suppose it's because every day first one then the other priest or seminarian mentions this or that isolated district of the United States so sadly lacking in priests to minister to the spiritual wants of the people. If such are the conditions in our own country, consider and pity the rest of the world. And they all say that it is America who must carry the new crusade of Christianity back to Europe after the war—America must take the swastika and reforge it into the Cross whence it came. American clergy and religious, armed with the sharp sickle of the word of God, must harvest the spiritual crop in the Ukraine and in Russia, and American hands must wield the hammer of Divine Justice which will reshape the destiny of the victimized Russian peoples.

The demand for priests, however, is not as distant as Moscow and Tokyo and Berlin, nor is it confined in America to Dakota Indian reservations and Carolina back-road missions. The immediate need is for chaplains in the Armed forces. America's brothers and husbands and fathers and sons, faced for the first time, perhaps, with the two-fold danger of Army life, the ever threatening physical dangers of the "front" and the equally crippling moral breakdowns of camp life, require spiritual aid and consolation now as never before. The seminaries—the basic-training centers for spiritual war—must constantly send out new recruits to take the places of their brother-priests lost in battle.

All in all this constitutes a heavy demand for priests. How much brighter the situation would be if every seminary in the country could receive fifty new students, young men enabled to study through the financial assistance given them by Catholic men and women who fully understand the present need and the deserving cause.

Such participation in the Apostolate of the hierarchy assists the universal work of Christ and you can be assured that abundant graces and blessings are being showered upon you. "Whatsoever you do to the least of these my little ones you do also to Me." The heavenly reward will be great for him who has given a cup of water in Christ's name. How much more exalted the glory of one who has assisted in "making" a priest of the most high God?

Pray always that I may advance daily more deeply in the knowledge and love of my Divine Master and I know that the closer I draw to God, the more clearly shall I see how pleasing to Him is this great work of your charity.

Ever devotedly yours in Christ Jesus,
Tom

Will You be A Friend to a Boy?

Norman J. Griffin

THE YOUNGER generation is going to perdition, as all younger generations have been going to perdition, from time immemorial. That these younger generations grow up to sigh and moan over other younger generations proves at least one thing, that whole generations do not go to perdition. If it were true that whole generations went bad, and that each succeeding generation's successors were worse, then the world would be progressively worse and today we would have a very debased society. Of course, many people believe that we do have a debased world. But stop and consider. Newspapers print the unusual, as news, and never the commonplace. Since we do read of crime and wickedness, we know it is not commonplace; otherwise, some other form of unusual thing, perhaps virtue, might be the current news. Every so often, some smug individuals or organizations start a campaign to save our youth from crime. They point with alarm and after the proper amount of personal publicity, they are last heard of still pointing, but doing little or nothing.

Now it is true that some boys become involved in crime. So do some adults. It is equally true that older men should interest themselves in boys. But if they are going to do so solely to save youth from crime, they are not going to get very far, first, because boys dislike being preached at and secondly, the adult crime prevention program is generally a recreation program and few boys' souls are saved by a series of baseball games.

Adolescence is a stage of difficulty and loneliness. The adolescent has grown away from his mother's influence and interest, and the average man is not interested, or if interested, is frequently unmeritedly patronizing. The adolescent has too much pride and acumen to be patronized, particularly by an



adult, who is himself not too impressive. However, the adolescent boy appreciates honest friendship and welcomes true help and interest.

From the standpoint of kindness, prudence, and common sense, a man should be interested in helping boys.

A boy emerging from childhood suddenly finds himself in a bewildering new world. He is no longer cute. He is not yet a man. He despises girls, yet begins to find a mild interest in them. He wants to experiment. He begins to state what he intends to be when he grows up. He can get into trouble. He does admire older men and tries to imitate certain of them. He is conscious of liking to be

part of a gang. Life has become complex.

Here then is the place where an interested layman can be of great service out of kindness, and be rewarded, by himself getting much pleasure.

The adults can sponsor athletic teams or lead Boy Scout troops. They can teach boys trades, help them with radio, aeroplane modeling, craftsmanship, community gardening. They can organize boys into community spirit activities such as clearing lots, cleaner street campaigns, scrap drives, junior first aid corps.

Some boys like debating teams. An older man can sponsor one, training the boys and getting up contests.

Perhaps there is a neighborhood boys' club, or a parish recreation center. Men are needed as sponsors, so here is the opportunity. Are you a former athlete, a craftsman? Do you have a hobby of your own? The organization needs you as a leader.

If there is no such organization, why not get a couple of men similarly interested, and call on the parish priest? He can supply the material facilities, but he needs interested lay leaders.

Would the boys in your neighborhood enjoy a

hike? Would they like to know about trees, birds, stars, minerals? Maybe they would like someone like you along.

Let us presume you live in a populous community, without playgrounds. Children play in the streets, in danger from passing vehicles. Why not get the public authorities to close off a street for a play area, and you and others supervise the fun?

Do you belong to a veterans' post? How about giving a hand with the junior bugle and drum corps? It requires time and effort and someone to keep interest stirred up.

Is there a chance for 4th of July games in your community to take the place of old time fireworks? How about a committee to raise money for a parade, a flag raising, refreshments, an athletic contest, bag races, high jumping, potato races, the countless forms of fun which need man power for leadership and help energetic boys to forget the fireworks.

Perhaps the boys in your neighborhood are interested in boxing. Maybe they would like a chance for the Golden Glove contests. You can coach, you can get equipment, you can arrange bouts; if you are a physician you can examine to see if the boys qualify. This of course takes more energy than staying home reading a newspaper, but believe me, you'll feel more youthful and have much more fun.

Have you ever helped a boy to build a pushmobile so he can participate in the Soap Box Derby? If you haven't you don't know what you're missing.

Are you a young curate? Think of the real usefulness in serving the boys of your parish, boys who may go elsewhere for their recreation and may lose their Catholic fervor, by amalgamation of other ideas. The pastor may be worried over a heavy debt. Maybe he would like to have these activities, but he is afraid to take on new expenses. Well, look into it and show yourself and him, how negligible are costs and how boy activity can be self supporting. Your reward may be lack of paunch, better health, and a better frame of mind. Give it a try. Remember a vocation is not the first stage of atrophy.

Now you will notice that I have mentioned most of the physical activities and have considered the normal boy, who will grow up rather well behaved. Let us re-



vert to the boy who is decent, but has a bad environment. The same activities can help him, although often he needs more aid and understanding.

Do you have a way with men? Maybe you do with boys. Can you make yourself a companion for the boy or group of boys with a problem? If you can't answer it, can you steer him where he will get the answer? To be perfectly honest with yourself, can you think of anything better than being vocational or social guide to a youngster, whose parents are merely procreators, and from there on have left a nice kid hanging out on a limb, lonely and friendless?

Let us go a step further. In your community, there are boys who are in trouble with the courts. Often such a boy can get a new chance under the guidance of a parole sponsor, a sort of big brother who has the boy often in his custody as a companion and friend. Experience has shown that under this system many a first offender has been put back on the right path and grown to be a fine, respected man. Can you think of a finer memorial to yourself than the place you built for yourself in the heart of that boy?

Man, young or old, there is many a place of activity waiting for you as a friend and guide to youth. I

have touched some of the high spots. You have an obligation to leave an inheritance of decency in this world and by helping a boy you sow the grain of mustard seed which makes that inheritance grow and spread and reseed. What finer tree, could you plant in your whole life than the one of happiness in the heart of a boy?



INVOCATION

The following prayer was offered by the Right Reverend Ignatius Esser, O.S.B., at the Launching of an Auxiliary Vessel at Evansville, Indiana May 23, 1943.

With infinite wisdom and endless might, O God, Thou hast planned and created all things. Among Thy most beautiful creations are the designing minds and the fashioning hands of men. With these marvelous instruments, mankind supplements in tiny measure Thy vast work of creation.

This day we offer to Thy Divine Majesty for Thy special benediction a new ship, the product of the minds and hands of many of our loyal American citizens. Deign to bless this work of Thy Children.

May the noble motives behind this product propel it into the bright prospects of Peace. Though warlike in its design, it is peaceful in its purpose. May it speedily outlive the need for its present form and give place to ships of friendlier frame.

In generous measure bestow Thy Blessing, dear Lord, upon the million details of workmanship that have gone into the making of this vessel, so that it may do its work with efficacy. Then will the vast waters cease to be dungeons of danger imperiling the nations. Yea, they will become fluid paths of Peace, freed from lurking submarines and stalking battleships.

Thus will Thy Blessing, O God, transform Thy mighty oceans into carriers of men and merchandise between brotherly nations, united into one vast Family — Thy Family, Thy Children. Amen.

Anguished Mankind

God of Justice and of peace,
Prostrate at Thy mercy throne
Guilty, we, Thy footstool kiss.
Kyrie eleison!

Thee we once nailed to the Cross;
It has now become our own;
On it we in anguish toss.
Christe, Oh eleison!

Human wits are at their end;
Peace can come from Thee alone.
God, toward Thy suppliants bend.
Kyrie eleison!

Albert Kleber, O.S.B.



A Midsummer Night's Scheme

Marie Lauck

OUR BOYS in uniform now experience a desert midsummer. The June sun rises higher and hotter. The sands radiate ever more fiery heat. Yanks wonder how they ever imagined a June could be really hot. Memories of midsummer tunes under June moons cause wilting spirits to know the meaning of penance.

Perhaps a few of these desert warriors will be reminded over their campfires of the stalwart Precursor, the light who gave testimony of the Light, the voice in the wilderness. St. John the Baptist whose feast, June 24th, was once most signally honored, has taken a back seat in the wilderness of modern living.

John the Baptist spent nearly all his life in the desert. In penance and self-privation he made his life work that of getting into trim his soul and his body. He knew he faced a fight.

There is little but legend to tell us whether John knew Jesus as a boy, but these two must have been close friends being cousins whose lives were ordained to intertwine. The two holy boys must have discussed between themselves the life of penance John prepared to live. John's father, a highpriest, was a man of position, but John ignored ease of life. John is pictured as a man tall and lithe. Practice repentance he did, but he was no starry-eyed tubercular. It took harsh living to battle the elements of desert life and win sustenance without begging. His clothing was an animal skin, testifying to John's prowess as well as his humility. His eyes were dark with that piercing quality which must have wrought fear in the souls of those who knew John preached the truth.

A warrior against sin, John the Baptist was martyr to the whim of his people's Dictator. John fearlessly challenged Herod for the taking of his brother's wife. And the weak Tyrant, powerful over his people yet putty in the woman's hands, had John beheaded. The story of Salome is pitifully well known. How utterly lowly, that the momentary passion for a sen-

suous step-daughter's dance should snuff out the light that held the torch for the Light of the World!

John the Baptist is listed at the head of the Saints, first in importance after the Blessed Virgin, who bore the Savior. June 24th, birthday of John is celebrated rather than his martyrdom, since his birth is so closely associated with the Nativity of Our Saviour. The fact of its being the high point in the canonical cycle is not accidental. As St. John Spoke "He must increase and I must decrease," so the days of the year decrease following John's birth as they increase following the birth of the Christ.

As many ancient customs were foreordained to aid the Church in the propagation of the faith, so it happened that the pagans celebrated Midsummer Day, or the June solstice with great fires in honor of the sun. The Church fathers of antiquity recognized this as equally significant of the light of the world and the sunrise of Christianity. The lighting of fires and the night watch became the celebration of the feast day of John the Baptist.

The feast took on a variety of characteristics in various localities. For instance at Oxford in England a St. John's Day sermon was preached in a courtyard embellished with greenery in order to give the appearance of preaching in the wilderness.

St. John's or Midsummer Day, began on the eve or vigil of the festival. This, then, was Midsummer Night. Boughs of trees were brought in from the wood and placed over the doors to designate rejoicing at the birth of the Saint, according to scripture. In towns materials for fires were gathered and kindled in a public place. The word bonfire appears to have origin in this observation, coming from "boons" or gifts of a social or collective nature.

On Midsummer Night the soul was supposed to possess more potency than the body. The night watch and the keeping of fires originally held spiritual significance.

One of Shakespeare's most lyrical plays, composed for a

• •
24
June

festive occasion not believed meant for public performance, is centered around *A Midsummer Night*. His characters in this piece set a new standard of whimsy in the spirit world. There is much evidence that this is a throwback to the medieval lore of Midsummer Night and its closeness to the spirit world. Shakespeare's finale, for instance, hints of the no-longer permitted night watch:

I fear we shall outsleep the coming morn
As much as we this night have overwatched.
This palpable gross play hath well beguil'd
The heavy gait of night.—Sweet friends, to bed.—
A fortnight hold we this solemnity
In nightly revels, and new jollity.

The nightly revels of the Middle ages began in some cases with an initial meeting at sunset, Midsummer Night, when the watchers took oath to preserve the peace. All the citizens formed a night watch for their towns, parading the roads in parties or in a great procession. Bearing torches in barred pots on long poles from bonfire to bonfire, several thousand watchers in the otherwise unlighted city, composed a stupendous sight. It was such an attractive festival that companies took to traveling to a center such as London for the pageantry and stayed over, continuing the watch for the feast of

Peter and Paul on June 29th. Royal trains, drawn by the popular festivity, joined in attendance.

Such festive processions still mark the Eve of St. John in Scotland and in some other countries. Peacetime Germany used to have festivals of this description as did the Slavic countries. But the English observance of Midsummer Eve was abolished by Henry VIII. A fear of such a muster of citizens may have motivated this abolishment of a religious festival. Henry must have had many uneasy moments over the passions which forced the Apostasy of his kingdom, the persecution of the faithful, and the bloody death or ruin of his many wives. Herod and Henry both feared John the Baptist.

As Midsummer Night, 1943, approaches on the recent battlefronts of the desert, the observation will not be "bon" fires but gunfire. The night watch of the soldiery will not be festive but it will be vigilant and it may be marked by the thoughtful soldier as the vigil of St. John. Used as he was to desert privation, John the Baptist may light the way out of the wilderness of modern warfare. Perhaps there was need for the fire of penance to burn into twentieth century consciousness once more a respect for John the Precursor and Christ the King.

CATHOLIC INFORMATION

ISN'T THE POPE PRO-AMERICAN?

IF THE Pope has power to call all Catholics to arms—make them fight when, where, and for whom he pleases—then really, isn't the Pope pro-American?

Wasn't it a brazenly patriotic Catholic—Charles Carroll of Carrollton—who boldly signed the Declaration of Independence and who used so much of his brain, time, and money in the American cause, that he goes down in history as one of our foremost patriots? Wasn't it a Papal subject, John Barry, who won renown in the Continental Navy and held Commission No. 1 of the U. S. Navy? And didn't Washington himself say in his address to the Catholics in 1789, "... I presume that your fellow-citizens will not forget the patriotic part which you took in the accomplishment of their Revolution..."?

And in our Civil War—oh most inconsistent Pope!—did you not call to the colors of the North those famous Catholic generals, Sheridan, Meagher, Rosencrans, Corcoran, Shields, O'Brien and others, to battle against your own brave Catholics of the South, Beauregard, Girard, Hardee, Dowling, Mallet, Adams and Semmes?

Ah, Marshal Foch, patriot of France, "minion of Rome," was it the Pope who commanded you to lead the allied armies to glorious victory? And what say you, our own Admiral Benson, our own Gen. McAndrew, our own Gen. Bullard, and all ye hundreds of thousands of American doughboys, devil-dogs and gobs—was it His Holiness who commanded you to offer your brains, bodies, lives for our country's cause?

And in other wars could it have been the Pope who compelled Catholics in such great numbers to fight against even Catholic Mexico and Catholic Spain? If so, no American need ever fear the "menace of Rome." Nay, but rather boast that the Pope is strongly pro-American.

But no, dear Neighbor, the premise at the beginning of this article is wrong. The Pope has no power over any Catholic in civil affairs, with the exception of the handful who populate the Vatican City State. He is not pro-American any more than he is pro-British, pro-German, or pro-Japanese.

Catholic Information Society of Narberth, Narberth, Pa.



Books and Booklets in Review

All books reviewed in this section may be ordered from THE GRAIL, St. Meinrad, Ind.

WE HAVE BEEN FRIENDS TOGETHER

By Raissa Maritain

FROM the narration of the simple events of childhood to the penetrating analysis of philosophies—such is the scope of this book. It is not a biography in the sense one usually ascribes to the word, but more of a relation of numerous experiences in the life time of Raissa Maritain, philosopher and wife of Jacques Maritain. Nor is it a complete biography. This volume carries the reader from the author's birth to World War I.

Beginning with a quite pessimistic introduction (concerning the fall of France) the reader is led from simple, naive childhood tales progressively into very heavy treatises on philosophic principles of various thinkers. This progress is marked with rather decided emotional explosions. The style is somewhat disconnected.

This book is not one which would satisfy a reader looking for the adventuresome life of a Frank Buck or a Russian war heroine. Rather it is a book for one who revels in intellectual adventures. The author takes the reader through a whole gamut of philosophies, exposing their teachings good and bad, leading the reader through those false creeds with which she and her husband dallied in their search for truth. Price \$2.50.

UPON THIS ROCK

By Emile Cammaerts

OUT OF the unspeakable holocaust of modern war comes this intimate, courageous record of a father who has faced the stark fact of the death of his son in battle.

Pieter Cammaerts was young, promising and lovable—not very different from millions of boys now bearing arms. His father has not glorified him nor the relationship between the two. He has instead combined memories of the boy with an honest account of his own grief and hard-won renewed faith in a scheme of things in which death can strike with such suddenness. His book has a simple charm and a restrained poignancy that is rare in the literature of the present war.

Every American parent who has to face the personal tragedy of death will find help and comfort in Professor Cammaerts's experience—in the wisdom and indomitable courage which light his record of the path to spiritual peace.

Emile Cammaerts is a Belgian poet, playwright and patriot, who since 1933 has occupied the Chair of Belgian Studies at the University of London. Price \$1.00.

THE MARCH TO LIBERATION

By Yves Simon (Translated from the French by Victor M. Hamm)

PROF. Yves Simon, professor of philosophy at the University of Notre Dame, came to this country from his native France shortly before the outbreak of the present war. In *The March to Liberation*, Prof. Simon has written a keen and flaming book: keen in its clear and acute analysis of the French crisis, and indeed of all political crises, flaming in its faith and hope for the liberation of France and of the world from the sinister and nefarious tyranny of the Axis powers.

It is a book for all free men fighting against the powers of darkness and of despotism now rampant over the entire globe. It does not minimize the might and the diabolical

cleverness of the enemy; but it does present and champion, with a vigor and a faith that should inspire all of us, the justice and the secret strength of the cause for which we are struggling in this most stupendous of all wars.

It demonstrates with especial clarity and force the true nature of this war, a war not of nations but of all free men everywhere against despotism—an *international civil war*. It dissects with unflinching honesty the weaknesses of the policy of the democracies up to the present, particularly the policy of the Third Republic in France. It sets forth with an acumen that is sometimes painful in its merciless penetration, the skill and wickedness of Nazi strategy. It sketches a sane and solid approach to the solution of the tantalizing problem of authority and liberty. Above all, it throbs with vivid faith and tonic hope. There is no defeatism in this book. There is the dazzling prospect of victory, if we are willing to pay the price of heroism.

Prof. Simon was born in France in 1903 and was 15 years of age when the last war ended. Inability to meet the physical qualifications have prevented him from entering the army in the Global War.

He was educated at the Catholic Institute of Paris, College of Letters and Science from 1920 to 1929. After spending two years in European travel, he taught at the Catholic University of Lille and at the Catholic Institute of Paris. He received his doctor's degree in 1934. In 1938 he joined the faculty of Notre Dame University.

His writing and lectures have shown a sound understanding of world problems and demonstrated a keen, analytical mind. Price \$2.00.

THE ETERNAL PURPOSE

By Blanche Mary Kelly

THE AUTHORESS has given us a valuable and comforting book on suffering, its meaning and its beauty, without writing a word. She has arranged scriptural texts in a kind of thesaurus under nine headings, and without doing violence to the exegesis of the verses has given us delightful prayer and meditation in the language of the Holy Spirit. Each text is identified but not in such a way as to mar the pages with numbers or to break the continuity by authentifications. The texts are identified in the rear of the book. Perhaps many who have never before realized the depths of the riches of the wisdom of God will come to know through this book that every heart-ache has its balm and every grievance its solace in the inspired words of Holy Writ. The beautiful introduction is from the pen of Father James M. Gilles, C.S.P., Editor of *The Catholic World*. Price \$1.50.

THE BOOK OF CATHOLIC AUTHORS (Second Series)

By Walter Romig

THIS second volume was announced as "in preparation" in the April GRAIL, where the first volume or series was reviewed. All that was there said could be repeated for this new volume, which contains some 58 additional self portraits of famous modern Catholic writers.

These books are not mere tabulations of biographical data such as one might find in a "Who's Who" but are a collection of personal essays in which each author has a chance to enumerate his or her ambitions, successes, or failures. They bring into the pale of our personal acquaintances men and women heretofore only so many names to most of us. The alphabetical arrangement and the complete list of authors repeated in Series Two are considerable helps. It is gratifying to read in the Preface to Volume two that "the third series is nearly ready for press." Price \$2.20.

HOW TO THINK

By Arthur P. Fearon, Ph.D.

THERE are books on "How to Become Popular," "How to Master the Piano in ten Easy Lessons," on "How to Go to Heaven" that are hardly worth the paper they are printed on. No doubt the title of Dr. Fearon's book will suggest another such impossible treatise. But let me say that "*How to Think*" is by no means an impractical or impossible study.

Written for anyone and everyone over fourteen years of age, this brief and clear approach to mental achievements in all orders is an "Open Sesame" for ambitious students.

Americans are often blamed for their superficial thinking, their shallow judgments, and their faulty deductions. Good-naturedly many of us fail to see what can be done about it, especially after formal schooling has become a memory. But Dr. Fearon in his chapters on Analysis, Association, Memory, and Reason, shows us how to detect the error in a politician's speech, how to remember a difficult telephone number or birthday, how to understand and to explain the most complicated processes. Don't imagine, though, that he advocates the elimination of study. Quite the contrary he is stressing study of the right kind, orderly, quiet, composed study. Some people "study like fools" and wonder why they accomplish so little. "*How to Think*" will be the needed remedy for such persons.

PAMPHLETS

THE REFORMATION

By Rev. John A. O'Brien, Ph.D.

SUBJECTS as broad as the Reformation are indeed vast to treat in a pamphlet even of 64 pages, but Father O'Brien has done well to give us an outline of the principal characters and causes that brought on the Revolt of the sixteenth century. The pamphlet will serve admirably

for study clubs and if thoughtfully read by Non-Catholics will cause them to seek the whole truth at more copious fonts. His work in teaching fundamental Christianity at the University of Illinois and in the field of apologetic writing ought to bear some weight with readers, Catholic and Non-Catholic alike. Price 10¢. (Order directly from the Paulist Press, 401 W. 59th Street, New York City.)

OUR PARISH

By Rev. H. A. Reinhold

Here is a real gem for every Catholic. How few value their parish in its full significance! The first National Liturgical Conference studied this field in Chicago in 1940 and all who attended or read the proceedings exclaimed, "Why hasn't someone told us these things before?" The same comment will follow a reading of this pamphlet. If the reader wants a larger treatment of the study, we suggest the Proceedings referred to, which can be ordered from THE GRAIL (\$1.50). Please order the pamphlet *Our Parish* directly from the Paulist Press, 401 W. 59th Street, New York City, Price 10¢.

Priest's Saturday and the Sick

Priest's Saturday and the Children

Priest's Saturday and Catholic Action

These pamphlets explain the practice of devoting the first Saturday after the First Friday of each month to prayers for priests and candidates for the priesthood. The value of the practice is obvious. There is no organization of members as such. Each does his own praying in his own way, though these pamphlets (the third, fourth, and fifth, in the series) furnish specific prayers that may be used. Order from "Salvatorian Fathers," St. Nazianz, Wis.

Ink and Gravy

Quentin Morrow Phillip

THE ROAD went nowhere in particular. It was open and winding, straight and crooked, simple and devious. Depending on where you looked, into the sun or into an abyss, it wandered there in a manner least bothersome to your frame of mind.

Jock Gerdun's frame of mind was less a frame than a mixture of irresolutions. Defeat and frustration having slapped him around for as many innings as he had years, he was ready to chuck ideals he had adhered to even when laughed at by the boys who made a living writing for the pulps.

The sky was a splash of subtle colors. A quivering and faintly iridescent mist freshened the air. Along the edge of the road, the grass shone with a greenness that flattered nature.

Jock stopped to muse a moment. Behind him and over the hills was the town, all the towns where he had grappled with life and come out second best. Ahead of him were the open spaces and whatever he could make of them. As if he could make anything of them, except a background for some yet unborn literary idea.

"A pretty landscape," he soliloquized, "but it does not awaken anything in me. My ambitions have faded. My spirit is discouraged, and I exist in the flesh only. Peace eludes me, and I vision nothing before me but slavery and boredom.

"I wish I were an old man, with a taste for death. Or with a taste for solitude. But I am young, and I still want to laugh life in the face. Not that I have known anyone else to do it, but just to catch the illusion that I could be original about it. If I could be original.

"But who has ever been original? Every line I ever wrote has been written long before I sat down to pound on my Remington; and every thought I ever had was bent and bearded when Shakespeare and Milton plumbed it for gems only genius could find. I wish I were a genius, then I'd tell those editors where to get off."

Thus musing and soliloquizing, Jock came upon a billboard on which a new poster had been pasted that day. 'Wheaties, the breakfast food of champions,' it said. And on the white strip of paper that bordered the bottom of the sign, in black chalked letters that were not discernible from the road but only from the cow path meandering paral-

lel to it, was printed the legend, 'Try prayer, and be a champion among saints.'

Because his purposeless walk had moved him off the road and set him on the cow path, Jock wondered if fate always was designed out of accidents. While the legend got a smile out of him, it did something else to his natural curiosity, and so he walked faster to the next billboard which he could see at the top of a knob, perhaps another half mile down the road.

The illustration on the poster was that of a minister purloining a cookie from a plateful a housewife had set to cool in her open kitchen window, and the advertisement boldly proclaimed, 'Nobody can resist cookies made with Baby Ruth Candy.'

Jock immediately scanned the white border strip under the poster, found the black chalk writing he expected to find. It read, 'Steal an hour for meditation. You will get more out of it.'

Now, thought Jock, whoever was putting up these signs was either a crackpot or a very religious gentleman. Probably the latter, for the legends were each appropriate to their place; and even if they should prove unoriginal, they at least were mentally stimulating.

He strolled to the very middle of the knob, to get a long view of the road ahead, and it seemed to him he could see a dilapidated old Ford, with something that looked like a small trailer behind it, parked before a billboard a mile or so in the valley below. Unless fancy was playing him tricks, there was the bill poster he was now anxious to meet. Because the last sign was not yet dry of the water and paste brushes that put it up, he knew he could not have been very far behind the artist whose contemplative soul added meaning to a dull job.

"Mind if I sit down for a couple of minutes on your running board?" Jock asked, the while he watched the small bald-headed man complete his chalk legend under the poster proclaiming the comforts of the Regent Hotel in the next city. Finished, the newest legend read, 'Go to church. Rest in God's bosom.'

"No, don't mind your company a bit," said the old man. "Come a long way?"

"Walked since early morning," said Jock. "But don't ask me where I'm heading. I don't even know if I'll come back this way."

"Running away from yourself, eh?"

"That's nearer the truth than anything else," answered Jock.

The old man pulled a red kerchief out of his denim overalls, mopped his sweated brow. One easily noticed that he was clean cut, and that his features were those of an intelligent thinker....

"Well," he began, "you're not the only one who ever wrote pieces for a magazine. I did that years ago, when I was full of ambition, when I was young, when I believed hard work and plenty of it would, someday, drop the world in my lap. The materialistic view, you know."

"But one has to be a materialist to live, said Jock. "Money helps."

"If you haven't too much of it," said the old man. "Having it for its own sake is foolish, and futile. There is never anything but misery in the wake of wealth. I was rich once, after I'd given up writing and decided I wouldn't starve for the sake of my ego."

"Then you didn't care much about writing," said Jock, looking up at a swallow that sailed lazily in the hot, shimmering sky. "Writing, to me, is so tremendously important."

"Writing is never important, until you are willing to break your heart for it." The old man smiled indulgently, sat down beside Jock, put a match to a cheap corn cob pipe. "I never was willing to break my heart for it. That, perhaps, is why I broke my heart in a dozen other things. You know, no one has ever gone through life without having his heart broken in some manner or other. But mostly all have their heart broken without knowing or expecting it would be broken. It is when you have deliberately set your face to pain that you bring out the nobility in your soul. You may die poor for it, but you will not die unblessed by those who have known your struggle."

"Small consolation in their blessings," muttered Jock. "And there is no spur to ambition in rejection slips. If I was practical like my friends, I'd write for the pulps, and try for the secular slicks. But I've set an ideal before me, and I've confined myself to the hardest field in the literary business. But who knows it besides myself and a few others, and who cares? Still, the ideal goads me, and I go on for pennies and an unappreciative audience, when I could do better.... materially."

"If to thine own self thou art true," said the old man, waving his stick of chalk as if with it he would cut figures in the air, "it shall follow as night the day thou shalt not be false to thy audience, and that thy audience will someday awaken to thy gifts. You have a hard row to hoe; and if it makes you

unhappy to persevere in it, it would make you twice as unhappy to abandon it."

"It is easy to look back and philosophize in old age," mused Jock. "It is another matter to be young and struggle for recognition and existence. Everything I write goes so quickly into oblivion, and time and again the thoughts and ideals that seemed so tremendously important become, in retrospect, so tremendously insignificant. Yet, I go on, spurred by the faith in my Catholicism; and week upon week I renew my resolve to make a name and a living for myself in the field of Catholic literature—and nothing important happens. If the field were larger, if some of the editors weren't so hidebound to sanctimonious froth and pietisms, and if they would only encourage those of us who are willing to devote our lives to the furtherance of real Catholic writing, I would not feel that a broken heart is a high price to pay for a goal realized. But the field is narrow, foreboding to beginners, and most of the editors cannot afford to be liberal with their recompense. And for those of us who are trying to break with sanctimonious froth and pietisms that cast a false light on the truly human and truly virile membership in our Church—for us the field is so narrow that it is questionable if we are in our right senses for not abandoning it utterly and turning our talent to strictly secular publications."

"Ay, you have a case," said the old man, loading his pipe with fresh tobacco. "But, if I were you, I would not let it drain me dry of enthusiasm. Once you have tasted creative work, you will always be restless. So it follows that if you should abandon writing, or prostitute your talent for the money in the secular field, you would never have the satisfaction that only a page in a Catholic journal can give you. And that, my dear youth, is tantamount to advice gleaned from three score turbulent years."

"Let me tell you about myself. I was about your age when I wrote magazine pieces. Pretty fair stuff, too. But I thought I had genius and, as it does every genius, ambition reduced me to squalid quarters, where I was ashamed to invite my lady friends. I pawned everything of value that I owned, for the very necessity of existence—and, finally, I produced my masterpiece. A book. A book that was so tremendously important to me that I felt certain a discerning world would acclaim it as the most important literary work of the decade. It sold exactly twelve hundred copies, and I made seventy-five dollars on it.

"That finished me as an author. I became a contractor, and I made a pile of money. And I had a home where I was proud to invite my lady friends,

and I had motor cars, and I played golf with millionaires, and I did all the fool things millionaires do. But never once over the long years was I as happy as when I wrote those little pot boilers. Had I not sacrificed my health on that book, I might have been content as an ordinary scribbler, satisfied that somewhere in my output there would be a small gem not easily forgotten. But ambition, the cruel ambition that has its eye on material things and on fame that is seldom real, threw me out of my true self; and now I have been many years looking for what I had been when I was your age. I'll never find what I lost, but I'll never be discouraged either by disappointment or frustration. These little legends are the nuggets of wisdom the years and experience have given me. In them is the whole essence of living, and the essence, looked at from the vantage point of my many decades, is not a mist."

"They speak your literary soul, of course," said Jock.

"No." The old man blew his nose. "They simply speak my protest against the utterly materialistic. Putting up posters is a living, of course, and I do it because my wants are few and I am content with the small wages. But more than being content with the negative side of the job, I am happy in it because it keeps me outdoors, where nature and the heavens constantly remind me how capricious is human intellect and how permanent is the glory of God. It is in the open spaces where a man dares be most honest with himself, and where he realizes what he committed and what he omitted that deprived him of the joy that would have been his had he stuck to what should have been the principal work of his life."

"Then, you have regrets," said Jock, dryly. "If you had your life to live over again, you would begin with writing and stay with writing. But would that be as your life was intended to be? I am not a fatalist, but I am realist enough to know all life is subject to change; and I do not suppose a man must be in his old age what he was in his youth. The adage that once a writer always a writer is not valid except in a general sense. If I felt in my heart that I could become a millionaire by becoming a contractor, I doubt I would write another line. But I know nothing of contracting—"

"Nor does any man know much of anything else," said the bill poster, picking up his paste and water buckets and putting them in the trailer. "The only true knowledge is faith. Wealth is more the result of luck than of hard work. I have seen a thousand times more ignorance on Wall Street than in any average humble convent. Besides, experience bears

me out. I have been everything—writer, financier, bum, porter, farm-hand, jail-bird, anarchist, socialist, communist, and plain ass. Next to my youth, when I was happy to scribble, I have enjoyed nothing more than putting up posters, and annotating them with these little legends. I've had to come a long way to appreciate God and happiness, just as you will have to go a long way to find peace within yourself if you abandon your writing and the field to which you have directed it. Mere money is never a gauge of success."

"No, but I still think it helps," said Jock, opening the door of the Ford for the old man to get into his seat. "It pays the butcher, baker, and candlestick maker; it enables you to get married, have kids, maybe own a jalopy like this to run around in. No money, no incentive for anything."

"Well," drawled the bill poster, his eyes on the road, "there's nothing in the world stopping you from taking a job in an office or factory. Hard, honest labor has never yet degraded a man. It will furnish you the wherewithal for everything essential to life, wife and children included. Then, if your love of writing is as real as you say, you can do all the scribbling that will satisfy you, in your spare time. And whatever the recompense for that, it will be gravy for your table. Besides, gravy that has been slower in stewing is more to the liking of the epicure."

"You are no encouragement, either," said Jock, dolefully. "I don't want to work in an office or factory; I want to give all my time to what I love doing best. And I need something more than faith to work on. If I can't get that something more out of what I write, I'll take up peddling. That's preferable to inside slavery!"

The old man chuckled. "What a broken heart you are going to have. Probably will be the best thing for you. Who knows, too, if there are enough like you who will break their hearts to put Catholic literature where it belongs—who knows but you will start an apostolate this country has long needed."

Jock watched the Ford disappear down the road. When, an hour later, he approached a bill board near the next small town, he purposely looked for the legend he knew the old man would leave as his mark. It read, 'God is never pleased with a quitter.'

The sign was one of the new United States Government posters speaking the thought the nation believed in implicitly. All that was printed on it, in huge, red blocks, was the familiar three dots and a dash.

Meditorials

Paschal Boland, O.S.B.

If you wish to see God, clean up your heart.

Sarcasm, like vinegar, will not catch any flies for you.

You love God if you woo Him and pursue Him.

If you would be happy, borrow not the cares of tomorrow today.

How quickly joy and sorrow pass. One tick of your watch and the present moment is the past.

Although God is All-Powerful He never forces the door of any man's heart. He simply stands and knocks.

The scrupulous make mountains out of mole-hills; the lax, mole-hills out of mountains.

To greet your enemies with a genuine smile is not only self-mastery but Christian.

Bad example is more contagious than good example.

To love God does not exclude loving others, but in loving others many exclude God.

The only kind of worrying that pays is the constructive thinking over of things.

When the Pharisee lifts his hand it is not to strike his breast, but to point out the sins of another or to stab someone in the back.

Since we have not here a "lasting city" why should we futilely attempt to make it so.

Let only joy spill out of your heart and eyes, not tears.

A gossip often seems to have that divine gift of creating something out of nothing.

Whether you are a spiritual giant or a spiritual dwarf depends upon how much spiritual exercise you take.

Some people are all beautiful words and no deeds like fair blossoms that bring forth no fruit.

The alchemy of a smile will make a gray day show its silver lining.

False humility is a mask that pride is not ashamed to wear.

God does not expect us to understand His mercy, but to believe in it!

Human nature is the same, but every man is different.

Eccentricity is the advertising of queer ways of odd people.

Life often gives blows below the belt which no referee can penalize. So grin and bear them.

The soldier of Christ betrays not his God or his country.

It is hard not to believe flattering remarks.

Although exposed in a magnificent monstrance amid great solemnity and pageantry, the majesty of God is still hidden in the simple wheated host.

Suffering can be a sacramental.

When there are so many easier ways to learn life, why must so many choose the hard way of personal experience?

The stars are the street-lights of Heaven.

If you have hurt someone, don't blind yourself to it, but try to heal it.

Do not fear death; face it.

When forced to walk a mile in order to flee temptation, you had better run it.

One good use for regrets is to fashion good resolutions out of them.

Are You Moving?

If you are moving, or have moved, do not fail to fill in this notice, or send a postal card with both your old and new address to: THE GRAIL, ST. MEINRAD, INDIANA. The Post Office does not forward magazines; thus your new address should be sent to THE GRAIL two weeks before the next issue is published.

NAME _____

Old Address: _____

STREET _____

CITY and STATE _____

New Address: _____

STREET _____

CITY and STATE _____

(Please write plainly or print.)

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